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NOTES OF THE WEEK

THE decision of the French Cabinet to begin the evacuation of the Ruhr before August 16, which was the date fixed for the withdrawal by the London Agreement last year, will do more than anything else to persuade Germany of France's good intentions, and to strengthen the present German Government against the attacks of those Nationalists who are opposed to any step which would lessen the chances of a war of revenge. It is rumoured that the French decision was reached owing to pressure from London. This may or may not be so, but, in any case, we are sincerely glad to have the opportunity of congratulating France on a step which will greatly facilitate agreement on the Western Pact and the entry of Germany into the League of Nations.

M. POINCARE AND OURSELVES

We print elsewhere a courteous protest from M. Poincaré against our references to him in our last number. The efforts of the former French Premier

to control the affairs of Europe through Poland and the Little Entente do not permit us to withdraw our mention of his desire to establish French hegemony over the Continent, but we appreciate the assurance of his belief in cordial co-operation between Great Britain and France. It is because we, too, stand for Anglo-French friendship that we welcome so warmly M. Painlevé's decision to hasten the evacuation of the Ruhr. Englishmen cannot forget that it was the *Bloc National* which occupied the Ruhr, while it is the *Cartel des Gauches* which is about to evacuate it. Of these two actions, one was of a nature to make agreement between London and Paris impossible; the other may lead to a period of peaceful co-operation. Our criticism of M. Poincaré is due only to his failure, while in office, to realise that Great Britain is more interested in peace than in efforts to keep down a beaten enemy.

GERMANY AND THE LEAGUE

There has never been much basis for the argument that the Covenant of the League would be a danger to Germany. It is now quite certain that it

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would be a protection, and there is reason to believe that Herr Stresemann at last realizes the advantages which would accrue to Germany from an immediate application for Membership of the League. The Covenant is not an ideal document, but, from the German point of view, it is infinitely better than the other clauses of the Treaty of Versailles, which are at present all that the Germans have by way of defence against any action by the French which they believe to be unjustifiable. At present, for example, Germany would have no means of preventing France from sending troops through her territory; as a Member of the League she could do so. Furthermore, by adhering rigidly to the terms of the Covenant, Germany, with the support of Great Britain, can make the proposed Western Pact a purely bilateral Pact conducive to peace, instead of a unilateral agreement which would add to the probabilities of war.

M. PAINLEVÉ'S PROSPECTS

There is always an element of uncertainty about French politics, but it would now seem that M. Painlevé may look forward to a period of relative peace. The Socialist revolt has not led to the dissolution of the *Cartel des Gauches*, although the Extreme Left, headed by M. Compère-Morel, abstained from voting in support of the Government's policy in Morocco. Thus the Government has survived its first crisis, and there are some indications that, despite the difficulties it will entail, the Socialist Party will continue to support M. Painlevé on every occasion when its failure to do so might result in a Government defeat. We are glad that M. Painlevé is thus given a new lease of life, not only because he has shown unexpected determination and energy since he came into office, but also because a change of Government at the present moment would inevitably delay the progress of negotiations on security.

DESPERATE ILLS

In our first leading article this week we examine the problem of the coal industry, and suggest, with some reluctance and not without misgiving, that the time may have come when the question of buying out the royalty-holders must be considered, however distasteful it may be. The whole industrial situation in this country is deplorable; trade is diminishing, and unemployment is increasing with a sinister persistence. Unless some unforeseen improvement occurs the coming winter is likely to be one of the worst in our recent history. It is only because of the supreme gravity of the situation and the superlative importance of coal as the central villain of the piece and the pivot on which any revival of our prosperity must turn that we envisage the possibility of employing so desperate a remedy. We bring it forward by no means as a positive suggestion, but rather as a tentative scheme demanding serious examination.

COAL AND COMMON SENSE

Will nobody rid the miners of the turbulent Mr. Cook? Speaking last week-end at a Labour meeting, the Secretary of the Miners' Federation is reported to have said: "I am going to organize a month's holiday for all workers of Britain.

Only a month. What will happen? That's the revolution I want. For fifteen months I have said, 'There's something going to happen.' You will see next week. I will say no more, but that this country and this Government will be face to face with a first-class economic crisis." Where is the sense in talking like this? Are threats of "revolution" calculated to help the impoverished industries of the country? But since patriotism is unlikely to appeal to Mr. Cook, we will ask rather, are they likely to help his miners? To confront the Government and the country with "a first-class economic crisis," which would certainly—he is right there—topple British industry over into the abyss, is Mr. Cook's idea of helping the working man to the millenium. The miners' first step ought to be to get another Secretary. Mr. Cook is as bad an advocate of their cause as could well be found.

MINISTERIAL SALARIES

Cabinet journalism having been brought to an end, it is suggested, though quite irresponsibly, that Ministers, whether losing by the reform or not, should be paid larger salaries. It is, of course, perfectly true that Ministers are less well off now than when the pound sterling had its pre-war purchasing power. But the argument for enhanced salaries comes from muddled thinking. The political service of the State has never been intended to be, and never has been, commercially attractive. To make it so it would be necessary not slightly to increase but to treble or quadruple the salaries of Ministers. No one, especially under existing financial conditions, would propose that. To do anything less would be to waste money without attracting to politics those mysterious supermen who, with every aptitude for the service of the State, at present hold aloof from it and stick to their business at the Bar or in the City. Also, it is very undesirable to give Ministers any strong financial motive for clinging to office.

THE PLIGHT OF BRITISH FILMS

Having some time ago done what in us lay to draw attention to the lamentable state into which the once promising British film industry has been allowed to decline, we are heartily glad to read the letter in which nearly a score of distinguished signatories, including Mr. Thomas Hardy, have urged the need of national action to revive that industry. Our own admiration of the film stops well this side of idolatry. We cannot for a moment allow that the bare presentation of human actions is any substitute for the art of literature in which actions can be seen only through the fine mind of the artist. But the social importance of the film can scarcely be exaggerated. It is deplorable, it is intolerable that millions of young people should be growing up denationalized by being exposed exclusively to the influence of films which present alien modes of life. Great Britain cannot be allowed to become intellectually and morally an annexe to Hollywood. The remedy, as we have said before, is State action—insistence on a foot of British film being taken for every foot of foreign film admitted.

THE CHILD, THE CHICKEN AND THE COW

There is some suggestion of the Government postponing or even dropping the Summer Time Bill—which they had made their own in order to

expedite its passage—under pressure from agricultural members. The contemporary criterion of everything in the social life seems to be how it will affect, not normal men and women, but infants, half-wits, wastrels, animals, and the weaker vessels generally. Not so long ago a clergyman argued that public houses ought to be closed very early because otherwise children would be roused from slumber by the far too lively return of their parents. Now we hear it objected to summer-time that it does not please children or chickens or cows. We must really protest against the whole national life being organized to suit the three C's and the C 3's. The child has yet to be born that would like going to bed while there was a ray of sunshine, and retirement at six by the sun because it is seven by the clock is not much worse than going to bed when it is seven by both. As for chickens and cows, they must cultivate adaptability. And the Government, which has been weak about this matter of summer time, must really pluck up courage. After all, children, chickens and cows are still without votes.

NATIONALIST LEADERSHIP IN INDIA

The optimism of those who thought that a truce could be established over the funeral pyre of Mr. C. R. Das has been quickly and violently shaken by events in Bengal. The announcement there of the agreement reached between Lord Birkenhead and Lord Reading has sufficed to set aspirants to the position lately occupied by Mr. Das raging in competition against British policy. Mr. Gandhi is indignant, but is outdone by Mr. Das's right-hand man, Mr. Sen Gupta, and since it is very difficult for any but a Bengali to lead Bengal, we suppose Mr. Sen Gupta will succeed to the position, if not to the power abused by Mr. Das. It is not to be expected, however, that Nationalist India as a whole will continue to take orders from Bengal. The Bengali is in temperament so unlike every other race in India that only in exceptional circumstances can the general policy of the Nationalists be dictated from Calcutta for any length of time.

CHINA

Probably the ultimate result of the present Chinese disturbances will be beneficial to China. There will be considerable alacrity in summoning the long-delayed conference to reform the Customs Tariffs, without which the financial situation of the Peking Government will remain chaotic, and, more important still, the first steps may be taken to establish "the United States of China." Only by some system of federated states will China be able to attain to stability, and it should be the aim of the British Government to assist her to modify her structure to accord with modern developments. In the meantime, however, the anti-British campaign has assumed such proportions that Great Britain is faced in China by a problem which, in its way, is quite as difficult as the French problem in Morocco. The only other Power directly interested is Japan, and we feel that it is of the utmost importance for London and Tokio to maintain the closest possible agreement in dealing with this unfortunate business. Elsewhere we print an article dealing with the causes of the disturbances.

THE FASCIST STATE

Mussolini has succeeded in creating the Fascist State, and the speech in which he celebrates this achievement should serve to convince our readers that, in criticizing the Fascist Government, we are moved by no personal likes or dislikes, but only by a certain affection for liberty and justice. In future Mussolini will have even greater powers over the Press than he has possessed in the past, he can dismiss any magistrate or civil servant who is not of Fascist tendencies, and he has, in his own words, succeeded in "taming Parliamentarianism." From his speech made at the conclusion of the fifth National Congress of the Fascist Party we extract one sentence: "I want our Fascist journalists," he said, "to write only as combatants and to sharpen their wits for ruthless war on Socialism, Liberalism and Democracy." It remains to be seen, however, if liberty and democracy can, in the long run, be crushed out any more successfully in Italy than they could be in Great Britain. Italians have not yet forgotten the traditions of Garibaldi and Mazzini.

A POLAR EPIC

The return of Captain Roald Amundsen and his comrades from the icy oblivion of the arctic, after a silence which some had feared was the silence of death, is one of those rare dramatic events that stir the imagination of continents. That anxiety should have been felt for the safety of a polar explorer after a mere month without news is a significant measure of the rapid progress of our times. A few short years ago, three years without news in like circumstances would not have been considered abnormal. Indeed, a few years ago the air and the arctic seemed two of the most distant and improbable of man's conquests; but now the one has been called in to aid in the further mastery of the other. That Captain Amundsen's enterprise fell short of its final objective matters little. He has won a moral victory and opened a new era of polar exploration. Ultimate success is certain. Meanwhile he has earned the admiration of all men of imagination.

THE WEMBLEY STAG

The authorities of the Wembley Exhibition are nothing if not enterprising. Determined to show our own urban masses and the visiting foreigner one of the classic sports of our country, they have contrived a stag hunt. The stag, it appears, for we have not yet attended at this serious presentation of sport, is a pony, duly made up, and bearing on its meek head the symbol of Cuckoldry. The hounds are real hounds, but, unimposed upon by this stage stag, they chivalrously refuse to hunt a pony, especially when it kicks, and are reported to show some disposition to precede it, their experience having been that horses follow hounds. The hunt being brought to an end by the quarry overtaking the hounds supposed to be in pursuit of it, quite another and even more synthetic stag is flung to the hounds. But this, though full of dog-biscuits, they decline to touch. And so to kennels. It is lamentable that John Davidson is no more with us to immortalize this runnable stag.

THE COAL CRISIS

IT is time that the facts of the coal situation were faced frankly. Coal is vital to every great British industry, and a flourishing export trade in coal is a prime condition of our national prosperity. But a variety of factors working together over a long period have brought us to the point at which the coal mining industry is in imminent danger of collapse. No doubt a great deal of the blame for this must be laid upon the shoulders of certain of the men's leaders. These, and we have in mind only the extremest among them, have been more obdurate to logic than the leaders of any other kind of labour in this country. They have not merely, in a muddled optimism, supposed their industry capable of bearing more than, in fact, it could. They have not simply continued to press heavy and inopportune demands in the belief that they were reasonable and timely. Far from it. Warned that concession to their demands would bankrupt coal-mining, they have cheerfully admitted the possibility, the probability of such a result. In such a declaration of policy as the notorious publication, 'The Miners' Next Step,' they have even welcomed the prospect. The collapse of the industry, as conducted by capitalists, has appeared to them a necessary preliminary to the establishment of some vague workers' paradise in which the men would come by their own. Thus, it has been more difficult to reason with them than with any other body of workers. For, instead of being taken aback when presented with a forecast of what their policy would result in, they have admitted the accuracy of the prediction, rejoiced that it was accurate, gloried in the disorganization and ruin depicted in it, assured us that it was precisely in such ruins that the foundation of their industrial New Jerusalem could best be laid.

They have not been checked by any fear of consequences, and now, though not wholly as the outcome of their efforts, for the general dislocation of British industry during and after the war has contributed much to it, they are in view of that last piece of solid earth from which the "miners' next step" must be taken. But columns of the most eloquent denunciation of the folly and obstinacy of certain of the men's leaders will not improve the situation. It will not extort from them any suggestion for the relief of a situation which, it is to be feared, some of them still wish to see aggravated in their fond belief that bankruptcy is the manure of prosperity. Not all are so consistent. Some, perhaps, feel that things have gone far enough, but propose that the industry should be rescued by the intervention of the State, of course, in a sense wholly favourable to the workers. The coalowners, on the other side, put before the representatives of the men the facts of the situation in which a continuance of work on the present basis is clearly impossible. It is plain from the figures supplied by the owners, and they are not in dispute, that coal-mining must come to a speedy end in many districts unless it can be conducted more cheaply. Before the war, wages represented 6s. 10½d. per ton of the cost of coal. Now they represent 13s. 6¾d. There has been an increase of very nearly 100 per cent., with nothing in the state of the industry though, of course, with something in the cost of living, to justify it. The

labour cost of a ton of coal is now actually more than the total cost of a ton before the war. In theory, wages may be cut down, but a general reduction would certainly not be accepted by men whose leaders, in certain instances, positively welcome indications that the industry by going bankrupt is getting into the state in which some Socialistic or Syndicalist system can be applied to it. There remains the alternative of a longer working day, to which also there is bitter opposition, but which is not quite so unhelpful. We cannot look to have more coal raised for less money, but since the men are more reasonable than some of their leaders we may hope to see more coal raised for the same money. Where else can the situation be alleviated?

A point has been made about royalties. It is one which no Conservative can notice without doing some violence to his general policy. Royalties are not what the ignorance and venom of Socialist agitators represent them to be. They are not gifts which a perverse Providence has bestowed on the least deserving of mankind to the injury of honest workers. They are not blackmail extorted from industry by idlers. Where coal producing land has been deliberately bought as such, they are the reward, and the not very liberal reward, of enterprising expenditure. And in any event they are anticipatory compensation for the condition in which the land will be left when the coal is exhausted. The owner of agricultural land need not fear that after a hundred or five hundred years it will be unfit for further production. But land on which coal-mining is carried on becomes, on the exhaustion of the coal, as completely worthless as land can ever be—land which has been undermined and worked to death and rendered permanently unsightly. Royalties are, among other things, an acknowledgement of that.

But though royalties are by no means what the Socialist describes them as being, but perfectly legitimate, they are a factor in the cost of coal. Not, it is true, an extremely important factor. Their abolition would not make coal cheap. It might, however, bring coal down to a price at which British industries using it were eased appreciably and at which British coal could once more find good markets abroad. That would be a substantial improvement in a situation now desperate. Yet who can contemplate the buying-out of the persons to whom royalties are paid without a double anxiety—anxiety about the huge cost and anxiety about the precedent set by such an operation? If we are forced to envisage such a policy, it can only be looked upon by a Conservative when certain guarantees are forthcoming. There must be a guarantee that the purpose for which so great a sacrifice of money is made will truly be achieved, which would not be the case if further increases in wages or further reduction of hours nullified the gain of a few pence a ton off the cost of coal. There must be a guarantee that the particular industry relieved will bear some part, small though it may be, of the cost as soon as it is in a state to do so. There must finally be a guarantee that all parties to such a transaction will regard it as exceptional, and not as establishing a precedent of general application. But, given such guarantees, would the buying out of those to whom royalties are paid be altogether objectionable?

A BILATERAL PACT OR NOTHING

THE text of the French reply to the German proposals on security is at least as vague as we had ventured to predict it would be, and the debate in the House of Commons on Wednesday last serves to show how wide is the distrust which it has caused. Unfortunately the debate did not serve the still more useful purpose of clarifying the issues. And yet they seem to us fairly simple and straightforward.

Great Britain, in common with the self-governing Dominions, is bound by the Covenant of the League of Nations to do everything in her power to prevent war, by applying certain rules for the settlement of disputes. Apart from this general obligation there is the French demand for security, which has led Germany to propose the Western Pact. In so far as this proposal amounts to a definite promise by Germany never to demand an alteration of her western frontier, it should lessen to some extent the possibilities of Great Britain being dragged into further European quarrels. The French reply to Germany, however, contains one dangerous absurdity. Ever since the signature of the Versailles Treaty, France has demanded a special military guarantee from Great Britain, on the ground that she cannot face alone the possibility of a new war with Germany. And yet France, too weak to defend herself alone in the West, declares that she must have the right to go immediately to war against Germany should her still weaker Allies in the East get themselves into trouble. In other words, Great Britain is asked to guarantee the territorial integrity of France so that France in turn may be strong enough to guarantee the territorial integrity of Poland and Czechoslovakia.

This demand is so absurd that it endangers the whole future of the Western Pact. It might even endanger the whole future of the British Empire, since a Western Pact which gave France any rights to make war beyond those that are specifically laid down in the Covenant, and that are, therefore, accepted in advance by the Dominions, would be a commitment in which they would almost certainly refuse to co-operate. On that rock the Empire might split. Increasing unemployment and the diminution of exports confirm us in our belief that Great Britain needs peace in Europe now as never before. But a promise of support to France in order that she may be strong enough to support Poland or Czechoslovakia, whatever the rights or wrongs of any dispute, would certainly not lead to peace.

We emphasize the dangers which have to be faced in the coming months, not because we want the Western Pact to fail, but because we want it to succeed. The best method of assuring success will be to summon, with the least possible delay, a conference of interested Powers to discuss the German proposals and the French reply to them. If the British Government is in fact fully determined to accept nothing but a strictly bilateral pact drawn up in the spirit of the Covenant, then it has nothing to fear from frank discussion round a conference table. But Great Britain cannot endanger her relations with the rest of the Empire by discussing any project which takes into account French treaties, the terms of which are kept secret.

THE REGULATED LIFE

A LITTLE while ago, a blameless citizen, proposing to himself to have ham and eggs for breakfast the next morning, went into a shop to purchase those articles. It was an early closing day, which meant not that all provision dealers were closed, but that though open, they were permitted to sell only certain classes of edibles. Ham, he found, could be purchased. It was a perishable commodity. Eggs, on the other hand, were immortal, and therefore not to be vended on such a day. This may have been a local and unusual ruling, or the shopkeeper, harassed like the rest of us by laws and rules beyond computation, may have supposed himself to be debarred from selling eggs when a benevolent State allowed him to do so. Dairies may apparently sell eggs at pretty well any time. The coffee-stall may vend cigarettes after eight o'clock, and so may automatic machines when, unlike the celebrated machine on the Scottish railway station, they are still automatic and not a'-to-hell. An enterprising vendor who ministers to the needs of belated journalists somewhere in the neighbourhood of Fleet Street has found it legally possible to begin dispensing tobacco at one minute past midnight on the ground that that is selling by day and before 8 p.m. Very probably there is some means of getting sweets in the small hours. However, it is impossible at any hour to get from a licensed grocer, often the only dealer in spirits near by, a half-bottle of spirits. The sale of half-bottles is subject to regulations. So is everything else. If Toole were now alive to make his heart-rending midnight appeal for a little bird-seed for a sick canary, he would be told that the sale of bird-seed was governed by the Matutinal Feeding of Caged Birds Act.

We live under an immensely complicated system of assinine regulations that either have no purpose or, while inflicting petty annoyance on the public, fail to serve such purpose as was claimed for them. One set of laws is professedly directed towards securing a minimum of necessary leisure for shop assistants, and with that object we have the liveliest sympathy. But when, for instance, a provision shop is left open, and yet restricted as to the things it may sell, no opportunity is in fact given to Alf and Mabel to study the habits of Hollywood at the local cinema. They are then in the shop, serving out one set of articles, explaining that another cannot be supplied. They get their half-holiday quite independently of the regulation which allows the sale of one-half of the ingredients of a meal, but prohibits the sale of the other. The restriction on the sale of cigarettes after 8 p.m. sends the tobacconist to bed, no doubt, but obliges ordinary members of the public to wander about looking for coffee-stalls or automatic machines. That other ruling about half-bottles of spirits forces the man who wants a small quantity of brandy for medicinal use to buy double the quantity. Yet it is not on the inconvenience and absurd results of such regulations that we would chiefly base an argument against them. All this fiddling control is most objectionable because it is what we have just called it, because it is a small-minded, over-

anxious meddling with the little things of life. The fewest possible laws and regulations, but those voluntarily respected by all decent people: that is the ideal. We have arrived at a stage when the aim seems to be the largest possible number of laws and regulations, and those such as excite derision. This is not progress. In the decadence of the classic civilization Marseilles had a law prohibiting women from drinking undiluted wine; Athens one limiting the amount of finery to be purchased by any woman; Constantinople one against the sale, even before 8 p.m., of razors. It is back to such old follies that we move in an England hag-ridden by rules.

THE COMEDY OF WESTMINSTER

IT is with a sigh of relief that Members in all parts of the House of Commons have at last taken leave of the Finance Bill. The long battle, of which the issue was never doubtful, at last is over, the blunted weapons can be laid aside. The debates from which we have so recently emerged are already fading into the domain of history, where it is to be feared they will occupy no very distinguished corner, and will be but seldom disturbed by the prying eye of posterity. For a little while they will linger in the memories of those who took part in them, but it will be impossible for even the most eager partisans on either side to pretend that they have been marked by any particular brilliance either in defence or in attack, and that either the urbanity of the Chancellor, the acerbity of the ex-Chancellor or the desperate efforts at self-assertion on the part of the Liberals have been sufficient to redeem from the taint of mediocrity the Budget discussions of 1925.

The final stages of the contest were uneventful. The only incident that beguiled the tedium of Monday's deliberations arose out of a proposal put forward by Sir Leslie Scott and supported by Sir Alfred Mond in favour of a remission of income tax on the reserve funds of companies. This suggestion, assured as it was of a large measure of both Conservative and Liberal support, produced a curious cleavage in the ranks, leaving the Government to rely upon the Labour Party for the approval which their own followers withheld. The art of being Financial Secretary to the Treasury consists in never making a mistake. Colonel Guinness, who in the absence of the Chancellor at a Cabinet meeting was left to cope with the situation, came perilously near to making one on this occasion. He began by expressing the gratitude of the House to the Honourable and Learned Member for having brought forward this very interesting topic, and went on to assure him that the matter would be considered and explored with a view to dealing with it on a safe and satisfactory basis. This is called the "sympathy gambit," and is as popular with Chancellors and Financial Secretaries as "pawn to King's four" is with chess players. But even the safest opening can lead an honorary player into difficulties unless it is followed up by the prescribed moves. Having given a qualified blessing to the proposal, Colonel Guinness proceeded to point out its drawbacks and ended by

describing it as nothing less than a revolutionary change. Now the Labour Party are very sensitive to the sound of the word "revolution," and they were not slow to take advantage of the slip. Mr. William Graham, who has been Financial Secretary in his day, was on his feet in an instant. Now they knew, he pointed out, which was really the revolutionary party, for this very proposal which was brought forward this year by back-bench Conservatives was advocated last year by no less a person than Mr. Neville Chamberlain, a former Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Graham went on to deal with the proposal on its merits in a speech which Mr. Hilton Young described as the one which should have been the official reply of the Government.

On Tuesday the much debated silk taxes were debated once again. It is undeniable that the over advertised and eagerly promoted attack upon these duties has sadly fizzled out since its reception. The enemies of the Government in all camps thought that they had been presented with a magnificent stick of ebony for the destruction of their enemies, but the stick has turned into a broken reed. The silk trade refuse to believe that they are going to be ruined, and through the mouths of those best qualified to speak for them proclaim their satisfaction. The artificial silk trade, that struggling industry which was to be strangled in its cradle, cannot escape from the hard fact, that, since the effect of the new taxes has been fully understood, the shares of its principal company have shown a steady tendency to mount. The lack of life and interest in the attack was finally demonstrated on Tuesday afternoon when during the progress of the debate it was discovered that there were not forty Members in the House.

On Wednesday there was an interlude. In order to add a little interest to the last night of that unenlivening performance, "The Finance Bill," there was a revival for one night only of the old favourite entitled "Foreign Affairs." When the curtain went up there was an unusually crowded House, for which the cold snap may have been partly responsible. The audience sat patiently through the first familiar scenes. They are always patient with Mr. Austen Chamberlain, whom they find it impossible to dislike, but on this occasion he tried their forbearance almost to breaking point. If the best Foreign Minister is the one who says least in the greatest number of words there was never a Foreign Minister to compare with Mr. Chamberlain. He was followed by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald in an unprovocative, conciliatory mood, and Mr. Lloyd George, as usual, played third fiddle. The discussion was nominally about a Pact which does not at present exist even in draft form, so that defence and attack were necessarily of a highly academic order. Falling short of arguments against a non-existent pact, Mr. MacDonald fell back on the defence of a dead and done with protocol, which rendered the task of Mr. Lloyd George somewhat easier, as he was able to deliver a joint attack against both pact and protocol.

FIRST CITIZEN

VIRTUE AND THE VAMP

BY GERALD GOULD

WHEN one exclaims: "Well, all I can say is, either Jones is mad or I am," one means that Jones is mad. But sometimes a more real, a humbler and profounder doubt, assails the ego; one is confronted with a whole scheme of things, apparently coherent within itself, yet ordered according to assumptions the most monstrous and improbable; one finds it hard to suppose that, on assumptions as improbable as these appear, any scheme at all can ever in any circumstances have been erected; and suddenly, horribly, one says to oneself: "My mind is going!" This happens when I go to the pictures.

I went the other night, and should like to tell you the story portrayed upon the screen. I cannot remember the name of the film, nor whom it was featuring (whom, I should say, it was "with"; for, in the new language of the new art, this term appears to have superseded the other). Nor again can I be certain that I shall record the details of the story right, for I have a poor screen-memory, and some of the incidents I could not quite follow even in the first instance. I will give you, however, an impression.

The heroine, it appeared from the captions, was widely known as the Worst Vamp in the West. Now, nothing can give greater pleasure to quiet, home-keeping men than the pictorial representation of the gayer forms of sin; and I settled myself in my one-and-tenpenny tip-up plush-covered fauteuil with the liveliest and most delightful expectations. Alas! There was a large room, with a swimming-bath let into the floor, and a staircase going up behind: between the stairs and the bath stood a number of people of both sexes in uncompromising evening-dress, and in attitudes which could not be called compromising. I think these people were drinking wine, which of course in America is, if not a sin, at least a crime; but they did not appear to have drunk too much. Then an oldish man, presumably a Roué, instigated several young women to jump into the bathing-pool and swim, which they did, fully clad, and swam very nicely. The place was promptly raided by the police. It turned out, however, that the police had been put up to it by the Vamp's Press-agent.

The Vamp was terribly upset next day, when she saw her picture in the papers, with a full story of her orgy. For the picture was likely to be reproduced in the New York Press; and so it might come under the eyes of her Little Sister. Every Vamp has a Little Sister, who is pure and good, who has been trained by dear old nuns to do plain sewing and live in the country, and who is wholly ignorant of those functions of the human body commonly described as "Life." This Little Sister knew perhaps less about Life than most; she had probably never heard of Los Angeles; she apparently did not guess that her Big Sister was the Big Noise, as noises go in the silent drama; she had been screened from the screen. When the Vamp came East she put off all those little tricks and gestures by which vampery proclaims itself; the movie-accident was not her trade; she was just her sweet, simple self;

and the Little Sister must never, never know the truth. That is the worst of the picture-papers.

As far as I could gather, the Vamp had actually never done anything worse than give a party; so I don't know what she was hiding from the Little Sister. It is true that a millionaire asked her to go on his yacht; but she didn't go; and anyway his intentions were, I think, possibly honourable, though he did not make himself clear. He next transferred his suit to the Little Sister, whose address he found in the Vamp's room; the Vamp, hearing of this, jumped to the conclusion that his intentions were still what she had supposed them to be before, threw up her part in the midst of rehearsal, stamped her foot at her producer, and went to New York with her personal manager and a revolver. She visited the millionaire by night, in evening-dress, and took the revolver in her vanity-bag. Her idea was to offer herself to the millionaire, as a means of distracting his attention—and attentions—from the Little Sister: failing this, she proposed to shoot him. Just as her fingers closed on the revolver, however, he mentioned that he had become good, as millionaires will—under the influence of young girls. He was going to marry the Little Sister. At the blessed word marriage, the Vamp put away the revolver and fetched out her handkerchief. She was so happy that she cried. She would give her Little Sister the most splendid wedding! But here comes the pathos of the situation—the millionaire's family would refuse to recognize a Vamp! There remained one supreme sacrifice she could make for her Little Sister—she could give her up! She gave her up. She came to the wedding, veiled and dressed in black; she kissed the bride's draperies as they floated past, and turned away in tears; and she married her personal manager, which after all is the best thing a woman can do.

Now, I have no fault to find with this film, as a film; it was well staged, well produced, well acted; it affected the audience (and this frightened me with a sense of my own isolation) profoundly. But I don't understand. I don't understand the actions or the motives. Is it wicked to swim in your evening clothes? Would it scar a girl's mind to know that her sister acted for the films? Would anybody be prepared to go the length of murder on an entirely false assumption, without even taking the trouble to ask whether the assumption was false or not? Would a celebrated actress be barred and banned by an American family? If she were, is there any reason why she should not go on seeing her sister, even if her sister married into that family? I am not prejudging the answers to these questions, or to a thousand more like them—for almost never do I attend the pictures without being puzzled and appalled. Do I misread the whole thing? Or is there really a world, solid, vital, significant, of motives that I shall never plumb, conventions that I shall never grasp, respectabilities that I shall never respect, agonies and immolations that will always seem to me silly? Is it I who am out of touch with reality, or is that remorseless, self-confident rapidity of the screen unreal? Am I mad, or . . . well, no reference is intended to any living person; but, in short, am I mad, or is Jones?

THE CHINESE CRISIS

BY COLONEL P. T. ETHERTON

(Late H.M. Consul-General in Chinese Turkistan)

THE evolutionary stage through which China is now passing creates an international situation of the first magnitude. A state of turmoil and unrest has existed since the revolution of 1911, when the monarchy was overthrown and replaced by a republic. With this event the Chinese political system underwent complete change. The revolution may be said to have originated with the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, when her defeat brought China to the verge of disintegration, a fate the Emperor averted by instituting certain democratic reforms which were long overdue. With the appearance on the political stage of the Empress-Dowager a new *régime* was introduced, the edicts promulgated by the Emperor were abrogated, and further strife and dissension arose. Then came the Boxer rebellion, the international occupation of Peking, and the Russo-Japanese War, which was fought out on Chinese soil. These events following in such rapid succession gave birth to a new political spirit desirous of reform and the establishment of a constitutional form of government.

The Great War brought far-reaching changes, and the Chinese when they joined the Allies did so in a spirit of optimism, hoping that victory might enable them to recover what they had been compelled to concede to various Powers in the past; but these hopes were dispelled by the Treaty of Versailles, under which the Japanese assumed all the rights, title, and interest in the province of Shantung hitherto held by Germany. This led to the Chinese refusal to sign the treaty in question, and increased the antipathy towards Japan. With the definite advent of the Bolsheviks the situation assumed yet another phase, and great efforts were made to inculcate the tenets of Bolshevism in China with, however, scanty success. The reason for this failure lies in the fact that the Chinese temperament is not amenable to Soviet teachings; Bolshevik principles do not find favour with the Chinese, who are an eminently practical race, and realize that such principles strike at private trade, a vital point with them, and interfere with the liberty of the subject, a leading feature of Chinese social life. It might be supposed that despite these national prejudices Bolshevism would find some favour. On the contrary its progress has been negligible, while, on the other hand, there is a feeling in favour of a restoration of the monarchy. The essentials of republicanism are wanting, and until they arise there can be only one form of rule, and that an oligarchic one.

We now come to the origin of the present unrest and the anti-foreign attitude that has been adopted. It is quite evident that the crisis is not due to the conditions of labour in the mills and factories under foreign control, but to political intrigue, and to Soviet influence which has long aimed at bringing China into that world revolution so ardently desired by the Bolsheviks. There is, of course, room for improvement in the mills in question, but conditions there are far superior to anything obtaining in those under Chinese control. In the crisis now confronting us there is an important point to bear in mind, and that is the question of extra-territori-

ality, under which our nationals are amenable to British law only and cannot be dealt with by a Chinese court. It formed part of the agenda at the Washington Conference in 1921, when an effort was made to secure the abolition of the rights we now enjoy. It will be remembered that under the agreement of 1902, concluded between Great Britain and China, it was stipulated that the Chinese, being desirous of reforming their judicial system and bringing it into line with that of Western countries, should be given jurisdiction over British subjects when the state of Chinese law and the reforms initiated warranted the step. Experience, however, has shown that the time has not arrived when we should relinquish our rights of extra-territoriality, for existing conditions do not justify such action despite the number of years the Chinese have had in which to remedy matters. Much of the prevalent corruption and the antagonism between provinces are traceable to the ineptitude and weakness of provincial governors, and to insatiable greed among the official classes for money and power, who are more at liberty to indulge their desires in that direction than under the Imperial *régime*. The restrictions placed on the activities of foreigners are perhaps the corollary to the rights they enjoy from extra-territoriality.

It is unlikely that development could take place other than under European supervision and control, as investors would be lacking for a purely Chinese syndicate, despite the fact that under the agreement of 1902, already referred to, British nationals investing in, and a party to, Chinese ventures shall be subject to the same obligations as Chinese participants, and entitled to the same privileges. There are, of course, large sums of British capital invested in sugar and rubber companies in the Straits Settlements and Malaya owned and controlled by Chinese, but conditions there are different from those now obtaining in China proper.

With regard to the question of foreign action in China, beyond the adequate protection of European interests in all the treaty ports and wherever they are in jeopardy, it is obviously inadvisable to interfere with the political development and evolution now going on. Whether China will ever assume a place as a dominant power is a moot point, for she fails in the great essentials of strength and self-assertion. The ethics of Confucianism, on which the whole life and being of the Chinese have been based for centuries, are anti-militarist; the people are pacifist by training and instinct, they have no aspirations towards martial greatness, and in any dispute, irrespective of the issues at stake, mediation is at once the strong point with them.

In population and potential strength China is the first in the world, and her natural, industrial, and economic resources are such that she could be the richest country, and her national debt would be small compared with her potential revenue. Quite apart from the strikes and attacks on foreigners which eventuate as the result of Red influence, the difficulty to contend with in the regeneration of China lies in breaking up the numerous military bodies, and in bringing the provinces under one government, which must be a stable and progressive one, for stability is a vital factor in the evolutionary stage. Foreign aggression in the matter of land and spheres of influence must cease, the forces of obstruction must be removed, and industrial

development can then proceed with a resultant increase in the purchasing power of the people.

In conclusion, one can say that there is hope of redemption and the creation of a strong and united China, should those controlling her destinies possess the requisite power and personality to form a government commanding the respect of the people. For the Chinese, as a whole, are not partial to strikes and industrial disturbance and do not favour Soviet ideas, and with the establishment of a sound constitutional rule they will take the road that leads to peace and prosperity.

THE THEATRE

ROMANTIC OCCASIONS

By IVOR BROWN

The Fantastics and The Two Pierrots. By E. Rostand. Played by O.U.D.S. in Wadham College Garden.

The Man with a Load of Mischief. By Ashley Dukes. The Haymarket Theatre.

DEFINITIONS are a necessity of criticism, and yet make a dangerous game to play. No sooner have you dutifully started to define yourself than you are involved in defining your definitions. Take that hard-worked word, "romance." "Fiddling harmonics on the strings of sensuality," said Meredith's Diana. "Strangeness with beauty," says another. But what is strange and what is beautiful? Where does honourable love leave off and sensuality begin? We are made wiser by these definitions, because we have found paths to follow; but we have not attained to fixed, abiding rest. Diana's epigram hits off to perfection a horror spawned after her time, the maudlin film which justifies five reels of pictorial lechery with a peal of wedding bells at the end of it. "Strangeness with beauty" opens the way for a confusion of romance with sentimentality. It is true that the two often meet; the drama of Barrie is their cross-road. But they need not knock heads. Romance is better than that.

Faith has been defined as believing what you know to be untrue; romance might be similarly analysed as looking for what you know to be not there. Faith, for self-defence, establishes formula and runs up a palisade of dogma. Romance has likewise its ritual and its breastwork of conventions. This kind of formalised romance is perfectly exemplified in 'The Fantastics.' Rostand cuts out Romeo and Juliet, Montague and Capulet in paste-board style, and then dangles them marionette-wise over the garden wall. No sensuality here for the harmonist to fiddle on; no strangeness, save of the costumier's making, for dramatist to beautify. Yet there is a thin and airy loveliness about the puppets; they are lifeless, but they adorn; they are bloodless, but they amuse. 'The Fantastics' is a shadow-graph, directed by a poet and, as such, is very tolerable stuff. Its routine romanticism is justified by its ritual, which is accurate, punctual, and precise. This type of play is utterly dependent on the fact that you know exactly what will happen next, as in a church service.

You look for what you know to be not in life; for a knavery that has garlands of goodwill; for young love that is crossed and uncrossed like a piece of ribbon; for old men who quarrel

with affection and make it up with spleen; for a pattern of existence, in short, that has nothing whatever to do with the jumble of actuality. Such plays are written only to be decorated by the actor, as ballets are devised for the dancer. The O.U.D.S., produced by Mr. William Armstrong, created a formal idiom and Mr. Gyles Isham was a wonderful Straforel, complete in pose, flourish, and trim exuberance. When he was on the lawn the romance of formula was perfectly realized. Tushery has its victories no less renowned than tragedy; but on a midget scale.

It needs cleverness to score these wins. In 'The Two Pierrots' the ritual sagged away into boredom. Pierrot and Columbine are a hard-driven couple. They should have retired from the moonlight years ago and set up house in Streatham. Perhaps it is still possible to make play with this familiar dalliance. But Rostand only showed that if one pierrot is a bore, two are a double weariness, and thus to enforce the laws of mathematics is no business of the poet. Here the romance of formula has worn itself out, and the white hues on Pierrot's face are indeed the pallor of death. It was not the fault of the players that made this episode fatiguing. It was simply that an atrophied stage-convention was being given vibro-massage to no purpose.

The Stage Society's production of 'The Man With a Load of Mischief' was so highly praised that a more public show of it was inevitable, and Mr. Frederic Harrison did wisely to pocket it for the Haymarket. Mr. Dukes's play is that rarity, a romance with an intellectual content. It is dated and decorated romantically; it has a formal pattern, and its story, like its dialogue, is far too good to be true. But it is more than a flowered Regency waist-coat beneath which the sturdy old heart of make-believe goes on mechanically beating; there is a head-piece attached, and you can take your brains to the Haymarket, whereas you needed only to take eyes and ears for entertainment by Rostand in Wadham Garden. A philosophical pattern is interlaced with the pattern of the story and the triumph of the serving man, which might be no more than the traditional romantic victory of honest jerkin over sinful silk, is also the conquest of the age of reason by the man of feeling. The lackey emerges from the century-old stir and fret of humanity in which romantic poetry and democratic sentiments went together. He has views about servitude, and is post-Rousseau; he has views about natural beauty and is thus a long way pre-Marx. As a rebel he is not explicit, but he wisely keeps his most cryptic utterance for his soliloquies in which no rude interrupter could bid him stand and deliver his meaning. Despite his taste for dark sayings, he is as delightful a character as has invaded our stage of late, and he has the good fortune to be personated by Mr. Leon Quartermaine, the best romantic actor of our time.

"Romantic." We are back at that word again. Is Mr. Dukes a romantic? No, since he has edged his story with so much wit and irony that the normal lover of romance will miss the easy diet. But he is a stylist who rejects realism, unwilling to speak,

In russet yeas and honest hersey noes

and seeking some "silken terms precise." The way in which he has given style to his dialogue

without falling into archaic affectations is one of the most delightful features of the play. Mr. Dukes, I fancy, has looked back to the Regency, because he looks forward to an English drama with far more style in it than the slack and slangy writing of the ordinary modern comedy allow. He would greatly serve our time should he be able to discover an idiom in which he can make moderns converse with grace without losing their actuality. There is room enough for romanticism in the theatre to-day, if by that we mean a higher standard of style than contemporary life affords and a higher standard of design than contemporary playwrights understand. For the romanticism of sensuality we have the films; for the romanticism of never-never-lands there is Barrie. Of an austere and a shapely protest against the formlessness of realism 'The Man With a Load of Mischief' is a first-rate example. May it be followed, and especially by its creator.

MUSIC

THE ITALIAN OPERA

BY DYNELEY HUSSEY

IF I seemed last week to be making fun of Toti dal Monte's performance in 'Lucia di Lammermoor,' I should like to make amends. It was the opera that was ludicrous and not the singer. Later in the week she gave a good account of Rosina in 'Il Barbiere di Siviglia' and acted well enough when she was not wholly occupied with the technical difficulties of the big airs, and on Sunday at the Albert Hall she sang "Deh, vieni non tardar" from 'Le Nozze di Figaro' with such perfection and with so complete an absence of the usual affectations of the *diva*, that the audience failed to see how good it was and I began to regret more than ever that none of Mozart's operas are to be heard this season. But my regret did not survive a little thinking and the recollection of last week's performances. For anything more deplorable than the *ensemble* both on the stage and in the orchestra it would be difficult to imagine. I make an exception of 'Il Barbiere,' in which all the singers were obviously at home and thoroughly enjoying themselves; the orchestra also ran—usually a little behind them. But on the other evenings, and especially in 'Aïda,' it was for the most part a case of each man for himself and the Devil take the hindmost.

The individual singers are not always to blame. They come from different opera-houses in different countries and they have obviously not had the opportunity here of working with one another sufficiently to achieve good team-work. It must be remembered that the principal singers in 'Der Rosenkavalier' had acted together times without number in Vienna before they came here, and that even in 'Die Meistersinger' there is very little *ensemble* of the kind which abounds in Verdi and Puccini. Moreover, the production of Wagner has been more or less standardized all over Germany, though I do remember a Siegfried last year who pretended to see Gräne on one side of the stage while Brünnhilde later on fetched the unhappy beast from the other. But there is nothing in the German operas like the triumph-scene in

'Aïda.' This was a miserable exhibition of shoddy pageantry with a slouching stage-army going round and round, and a still more wretched display of bad *ensemble*. The brass band on the stage might have been recruited from unemployed ex-soldiers discharged from the Egyptian army after the successful end of Radames's campaign. I expected to see someone going round with the hat. This result is not surprising when we consider Signor Failoni's beat, which is for the most part completely circular so that no one can tell where exactly the *ictus* is supposed to come. It is all very well for him to know his operas by heart and conduct without a score. He appears to forget that his business is to convey that knowledge to other people and we should prefer someone with a greater power of command, even if we had to sacrifice the retentive memory. The explanation is probably that Signor Failoni has ample rehearsal before the performances he conducts at Milan and is able then to convey his intentions to the performers. But here, with our system of scanty rehearsal, the conductor must be something more than a figure-head "on the night."

None the less Elisabeth Rethberg succeeded in giving a very fine performance of the title part. She is a dramatic soprano of the first class and her *mezzo voce* is extraordinarily beautiful in quality. She has not the amazing breath-control which enabled that great singer, Destinn, to phrase the music with such ease. This power was not used by Destinn as a mere feat of singing; it added something to the beauty of the music. For instance to hear those triplets curling on easily with perfect poise and with no breath taken until the word "scorderem" in the duet in Act III is one of the unforgettable things in one's experience. But this is only to say that Rethberg is not the greatest Aïda there has ever been.

Of Jeritza I take the minority view. Writing about her performance in 'La Tosca' one of my colleagues said that "she won every one except, perhaps, the superior few who refuse to submit themselves to the sway of such crude, unbridled emotions as this melodrama presents." Well, if I am superior, it is not for the reason he gives, and I seem to detect in his subsequent remarks just a shade of the same superiority as I profess. For my adherence to the minority has really nothing to do with the crude, unbridled emotions of Puccini's melodrama. After all, we knew what to expect of that. And I, for one, am all admiration for the theatrical efficiency of the work and, accepting it for the melodrama it is, I am quite prepared to revel in its crudity.

It was Jeritza's acting that I did not like. It was certainly crude, but hardly unbridled. True, she let her hair (certified by the Press to be her own) down in Act II, retiring to the back of the scene to loosen it about her shoulders, and allowed her make-up to run about her cheeks that we might know that she can afford to be seen in the last stages of dishevelment. But there was a dreadful calculation about everything she did, and we were to note at each moment the curve of her figure and the sweep of her gown from every advantageous angle. Not least among her calculations was the delay in her appearance to take her call at the end of the second act. And when she came, she leant as if fainting upon Scarpia's arm. She had been on the stage for perhaps twenty-five minutes doing

her *scène-à-faire* and she does not look a frail woman. I did not notice Frida Leider in a state of collapse after the far more exacting first act of 'Tristan.' This affectation was typical of Jeritza's whole performance which was rather an imitation of acting than the thing itself. It was at times a good imitation and deceived the audience, but one has only to remember Olczewska's Klytemnestra (the thing most comparable to it during the German season) to see the difference between the sham and the real. Whatever one may think of Olczewska's reading of the part—and I am not sure that it was altogether justified—there can be no question that it was a fine, if horrible, piece of artistry.

THE CONTROL OF POPULATION

IV

IN our second and third articles of this series we examined the arguments in favour of the control of population from (a) the international and (b) the social standpoints. We will now pass to consideration of (c) *Individual*.—The argument has frequently been heard that it is desirable to communicate knowledge of Birth Control to the poorer classes in the interests of the mother and the children.

It is difficult to know what percentage of the unwanted children born in the poorer quarters of our large towns are conceived as the result of a culpable aggression on the part of the husband upon his wife—as when he returns home drunk on Saturday night and threatens her with physical violence if she refuses to submit to his conjugal rights—or as the result of an ignorance of Birth Control methods which are familiar to the more educated classes. Certain it is that a large percentage of the children born are unwanted, and equally certain that among the very poor the ignorance of contraceptives is such as to seem unbelievable to those who have not had personal experience of it.

Thus in the Autumn of last year a group of seven externs working in the district covered by a large London hospital made inquiries of the mothers whose confinements they attended as to whether the child just born had been wanted or not. The inquiries were made, when possible, on the tenth day, when the patients were last visited, in such a way that their answers were more likely to be favourably influenced by fondness for the child than unfavourably by recollection of the pains of labour. Furthermore, where any doubt existed, as when a woman, for instance, replied that she had not particularly desired the baby before it was born but would not part with it for the world now, she was given the benefit of the doubt and the baby was counted as wanted. In all, inquiries were made in the case of seventy-eight children born. Out of these forty-seven were definitely not wanted, and thirty-one wanted, and the writer can vouch for the fact that if these figures err at all, they do so on the side of moderation. Thus, in at least one poor quarter of London, well over half of the children born are emphatically not wanted.

The hardships imposed on the mother by such conditions are sometimes very cruel. Numerous cases have been quoted by Birth Control advocates in their propaganda which can hardly be reproduced here. The reader can, however, picture to himself what it must be like for a woman suffering from the sickness, shortness of breath, emotional instability, and deformity of pregnancy, to have to keep going in some squalid slum, housekeeping, cooking, cleaning and tending the children without change of air or scene and without holidays, up till the incidence of the final labour pains. And no sooner is a child born than the husband re-

asserts his rights, and the same dismal cycle repeats itself without prospect or hope of change, or of relief from a body that has ceased to know the easy freedom and self-forgetfulness of good health. Indifference to the children appears. They are looked after out of a stern sense of duty. The native impulse of spontaneous maternal fondness is killed by the deadly routine, and when, as frequently happens, the child dies, after a few pangs of grief, an easy reconciliation, perhaps not without a deep seated sense of inward gratitude, is made to what is acknowledged as the "Will of the Almighty." Sometimes, the mother makes no secret of her relief. But no man who has come for any length of time in contact with these working-class mothers can fail to admire the patience, the stoicism and the grim fortitude with which they face their dreary lot.

Their ignorance of Birth Control, in face of the publicity the subject is now given in the Press, is almost incredible. The same quality of fatalism and resignation felt by the soldier in the war before the prospect of wounds or death is still evinced by these women in the matter of child-birth. One frequently meets with a sentiment that "we must take what comes without grumbling" that "what is fatal must be," and even that "we must not fly in the face of the Almighty."

A further aspect of the problem is the prevalence under the existing system of the practice of abortion. It is difficult, of course, to give any trustworthy figures in this connexion, since in many cases the fact that the mother has attempted to induce an abortion is not manifested to the medical man who attends her, or to the hospital authorities who take her in. The methods usually resorted to are of an amazing crudity. They vary from the pregnant mother jumping three or four times consecutively off a table on to the floor, or throwing herself downstairs, to her swallowing large quantities of lead, ergot, quinine and other substances as well as noxious doses of emetics, irritants and purgatives. Frequently the woman practises local violence upon herself, or engages the services of a professional abortionist, a class more numerous than is generally supposed. Such a person, after practising his art, is in the habit of instructing the woman as soon as she feels the pain or notices any hæmorrhage, to report herself to a medical man or present herself at a hospital where she is taken in as an ordinary case of threatened abortion. The responsibility for what may subsequently happen to the woman is thus effectively removed from the abortionist's shoulders, it being in the interest of everyone concerned to preserve silence as to the part he has played.

The damage done to the health of many poor women by such practices is unquestionably enormous, and might all be avoided by a judicious instruction in Birth Control.

When the effects of all this upon the children are considered, it is at once found that the question of Birth Control is intimately connected with the housing problem. The overcrowding in large slum families is notorious. The reaction of this on the morals of the growing boy and girl can be imagined. The writer has on more than one occasion attended a woman in confinement while several children were watching her from a bed in the same room, there being, in the urgency of the situation, no time to dispose of them, and nowhere immediately available to send them.

These are the main arguments that have been advanced on both sides of this complex question. It remains to consider them carefully and to formulate a view of this matter.

(To be continued.)

¶ Previous articles in this series appeared in our issues of June 6, 13 and 20. Back numbers, price 6d. each, can be had on application to the Publisher, 9 King Street, London, W.C.2.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

¶ The Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW welcomes the free expression in these columns of genuine opinion on matters of public interest, although he disclaims responsibility alike for the opinions themselves and the manner of their expression.

¶ Letters which are of reasonable brevity, and are signed with the writer's name, are more likely to be published than long and anonymous communications.

¶ Letters on topical subjects, intended for publication the same week, should reach us by the first post on Wednesday.

M. POINCARÉ'S POLICY

[FROM M. RAYMOND POINCARÉ]

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

CHER MONSIEUR,—Permettez à l'un de vos fidèles abonnés de s'étonner de l'inexactitude avec laquelle ses intentions et ses actes ont été appréciés, à deux reprises, dans le dernier numéro de la SATURDAY REVIEW.

Sans rêver jamais d'aucune "prédominance" par mon pays, j'ai toujours été partisan convaincu d'une politique de coopération cordiale entre l'Angleterre et la France et je la crois aussi indispensable aujourd'hui qu'hier dans l'intérêt de la pays.

Recevez, je vous prie, l'assurance de mes sentiments les plus distingués.

R. POINCARÉ

Sénat

[We comment on M. Poincaré's courteous letter in a Note of the Week.—Ed. S.R.]

TAXATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—The growth of unemployment is more than serious, it is alarming, for it means that while there is more "public" money being paid out in the way of relief, there is less private revenue being produced, and, of course, it is very largely out of private revenue and private capital that all forms of public benefaction in the way of doles, pensions, allowances, etc., etc., are paid. A certain proportion of the funds required is provided by the weekly payments of employer and employed, but the great bulk of our enormous expenditure in this direction is furnished by income tax, super tax, and death duties, with assistance from taxes on whisky, beer, tobacco, etc.

We are to-day the most heavily taxed nation in Europe and unless our burdens are materially reduced there is little prospect of any revival in trade, and until trade revives and our exports increase we must continue to tolerate that apprenticeship to professional idleness which we call "being on the dole." Higher wages and shorter hours than of old are only possible by the unstinted use of machinery, cost what it may, especially in certain trades such as engineering. This lavish use of machinery may be as "soul destroying" as the Socialist agitators declare that it is—that depends largely upon the definition of "soul"—but it is, at any rate, very body-saving and it makes possible conditions by which the wage-earner to-day is enabled to enjoy an amount of leisure which would have seemed fabulous to his grandfather sixty years ago.

It is only by the lavish use of every possible labour-saving device that Mr. Henry Ford can afford to pay very high wages to his employees, and without enormous capital the equipment of the Ford shops with the latest and completest labour-saving machinery would be impossible. The Socialist leaders of the Miners' Union are never tired of telling the public that many of the collieries in this country lack the best modern equipment. This may, to some extent, be true, for when an industry is perennially threatened with strikes and ultimately threatened with Nationalization there is, naturally, hesitation on the part of lenders to provide

it with the capital needed for its economic salvation. Owners themselves cannot say very much on this head for to do so would be taken as an admission of inefficiency, but it is nevertheless true, and it is equally true that the engineering trade is suffering to some extent from the same cause. Not long ago a well known engineering company was offered a lathe of a new and most effective kind but as the company had been making losses—instead of profits—for some time past it simply could not afford the £2,500 which the machine would have cost.

To save the country Mr. Baldwin ought to have pledged himself to a reduction in expenditure of fifty millions yearly during his term of office. It is true that to do this he would have had to face much unpleasantness in Government offices and among Educationists, but Education is a means to an end—the happiness of the people—and if the people are to be workless to-day and starving to-morrow as the result of Government extravagance and of the cult of idleness among all classes, then education will hasten, rather than retard, the chaos which must inevitably follow, since a full brain and an empty stomach go ill together.

I am, etc.,

Thurlow, Suffolk

C. F. RYDER

BETWEEN THE LIVING AND THE DEAD

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—A passage in A. A. B.'s article in your issue of June 20, seems to contain a curious anomaly when read in conjunction with the report of the Cunliffe Committee on Currency. The passage reads: "Who does Mr. Lees Smith suppose lent the Government this 10,000 millions to carry on the war. None other than these same *rentiers* who now hold Government securities and are paid the interest thereon." Now the report of the Cunliffe Committee (August 15, 1918), states that on June 30, 1914, the amount of legal tender money in bank reserves and in circulation in the United Kingdom was £179,926,000. The corresponding figure on July 10, 1918, was £382,730,000. Neither figure comes anywhere near the £10,000 million lent to the Government.

Was the same money lent again and again (adding 5 per cent. to the original rate of interest at each lending) or was money created for the purpose by the banks? In any case it cannot have been savings since as we have seen the total currency in circulation and in banks would not provide 5 per cent. of the sum lent. So that either we are paying interest on money "created" (which is wrong since it was no individual's money but the community's) or we are paying an exorbitant interest on a small sum lent over and over again.

It is a big puzzle but I believe the solution is basic.

I am, etc.,

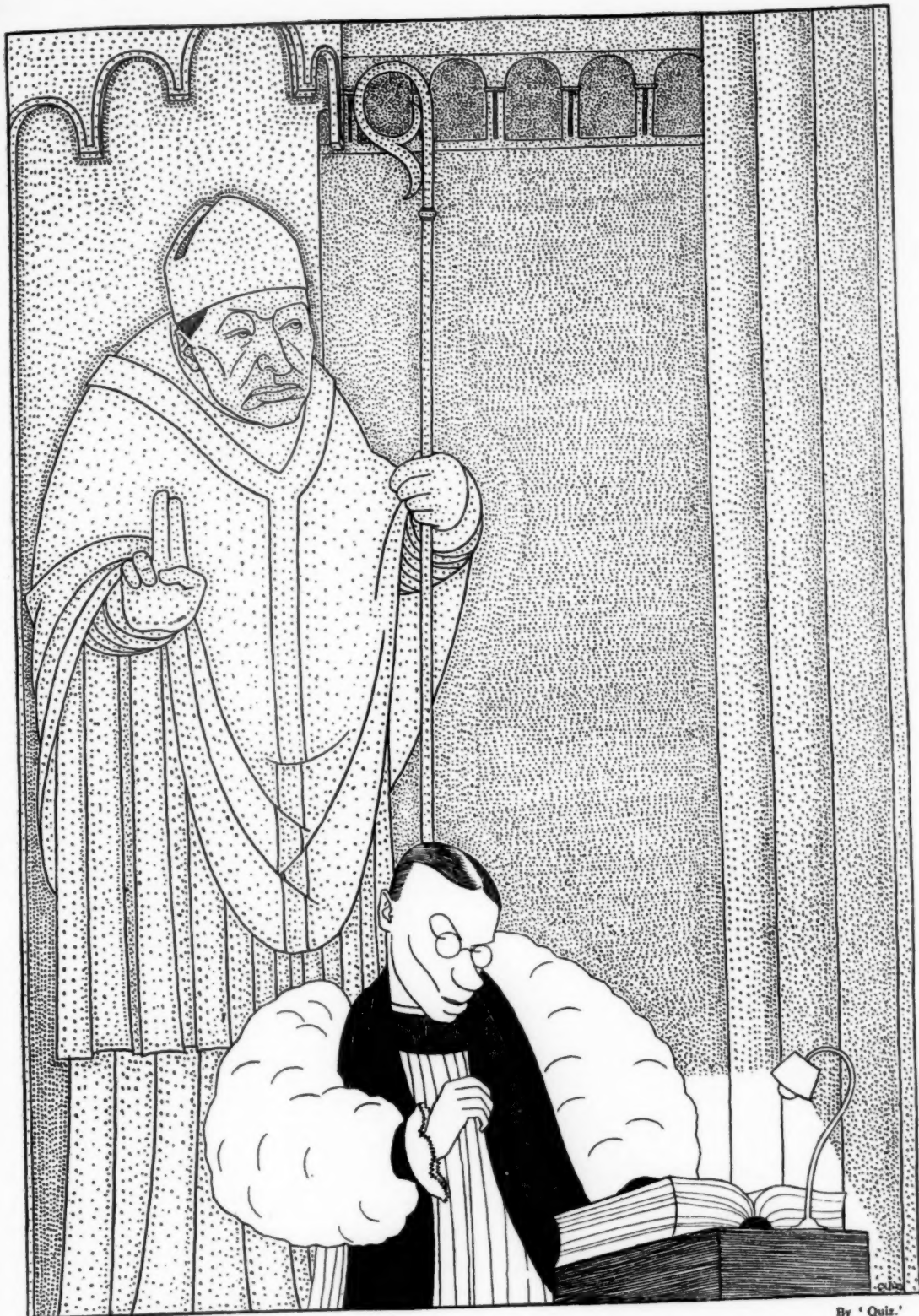
Culgaith, Carlisle

F. WILKINSON

THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Mrs. Oliver's letter is more witty than convincing. She evidently still fails to see that if the I.L.O. is dependent on arousing keen interest in this country before it can get anything done and if the average man is ignorant of its very existence, then it is quite useless to say that propaganda is outside its province for without that it might as well close down at once. Propaganda may fail to stimulate interest and support, but without propaganda of some sort there is not a ghost of a chance of any. To set up an organization of this kind without a trace of adequate publicity and complain of its neglect is exactly like building a water-mill in the middle of a field and grumbling that no heaven-sent stream appears to set the wheels humming. That, as Mrs. Oliver helplessly



Dramatis Personæ. No. 157.

By 'Quiz.'

BISHOP BARNES FIRMLY BELIEVING IN HIS CRITICAL INTELLECT

remarks, is to find oneself in a vicious circle, but whose duty is it to secure the driving power and not rest without it? Surely if the miller has been shortsighted enough not to make sure of his power already he should go out and dig ditches and deflect a stream to supply it. In matters of this kind it is the stimulation of interest which is the whole battle, and compared with it the passing of legislation is no more than a formality. If the I.L.O. stands helplessly waiting for some kind person to notice it, it expects others to do its work for it. This criticism is not intended in any unsympathetic spirit, least of all to the aims of the organization, but to point out what Mrs. Oliver at least has forgotten: that however hard its task may be the initiative lies with it and not with the public.

I am, etc.,
YOUR REVIEWER

"GENERAL" BOOTH AND HONOURS

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—One summer's day at Oxford, just eighteen years ago, a few undergraduates were watching a procession of distinguished persons make its self-conscious way up The High. Perceiving that the muster included a Fellow of our acquaintance whom we had not suspected of keeping such company, we raised an ironical cheer, which to our delight was immediately and cordially acknowledged by "General" Booth, then on his way to the Sheldonian, where the honorary degree of D.C.L. was presently conferred upon him.

I am, etc.,
Villa Maryland, Pau DORNFORD YATES

THE "SOUTHERN" AND TRUTH IN ADVERTISING

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Could not Mr. Epstein be asked to design a chaplet suitable for presentation to the Southern Railway Company when the first British Advertising Convention meets next month at Harrogate? The company has just refused to allow the Folkstone Chamber of Commerce to exhibit on Southern railway stations a poster declaring that their borough is "unsurpassed for health and beauty by any town on the south coast." Folkstone, observe, does not claim to be the best of south coast towns; it just modestly declares itself to be as good as the others. But the Southern Railway won't have these others upset by a suggestion like that.

"Truth in Advertising" is not enough for Britain's brightest railway line. They seem to have got hold of the idea that if folk will advertise they must be meek about it. And not a bad line for the advertiser after all; is it not the meek who are to inherit the earth? Let Harrogate, then, prepare the chaplet!

I am, etc.,
ABSALOM KING
South Holmwood, Dorking, Surrey

FRIENDS OF THE BODLEIAN

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—The Bodleian Library needs a fund by means of which its collections may be enriched by the timely purchase of rare books, historical documents, illuminated manuscripts, and fine examples of binding. The income of the Library, though now increased by a share of the Government grant which has recently been given to the University, leaves little margin for the acquisition of scarce and beautiful works. In the past many chances have been missed through lack of a fund out of which at the right moment such acquisitions could advantageously have been made.

Under the Copyright Acts, the Library has the right to obtain a copy of every new work published in Great Britain; but in spite of this privilege and of the con-

tributions made by Colleges and from the Government grant, the resources of the Library are slender. Such funds as are available for the purchase of books are required mainly for the acquisition of new foreign books or periodicals, and for the filling of lacunæ in those parts of the Library in which its collections are weak or defective. Sir Thomas Bodley, when he set himself in 1598 to the restoration of the Library, appealed to friends and well-wishers to help him by the gift of books; it is hoped that, by the co-operation of many friends who care for the Bodleian, his Library may now be given the help for which in his lifetime Bodley did not ask in vain.

With the approval of the Curators and of Bodley's Librarian, it has been decided to form an association, under the name of "Friends of the Bodleian," with the object of providing, by means of annual subscriptions, an income for the purchase of desirable books and manuscripts, for the acquisition of which the ordinary funds of the Library are insufficient. To secure the wise application of the money thus provided, the selection of the books to be acquired in this way will rest with Bodley's Librarian.

The names of the Friends of the Bodleian will be inscribed in a special register which will be preserved in the Library. The members of the Society will be invited to meet annually in Oxford to receive a report of the year's work, an account of which will also be given in the *Bodleian Quarterly Record*. On the occasion of this meeting, the Friends of the Bodleian will have an opportunity of seeing parts of the Library not usually shown to visitors, and of inspecting the purchases made from the funds to which they have subscribed. Each member will receive a copy of the *Bodleian Quarterly Record*.

We venture to ask those who, whether members of the University or not, feel an interest in the Bodleian Library to join the new association. The annual subscription payable by each Friend of the Bodleian will be ten shillings, but it is hoped that many will see their way to give a larger sum. Communications should be addressed to the Secretary of the Friends of the Bodleian, Bodleian Library, Oxford.

We are, etc.,

RANDALL CANTUAR:	J. WELLS
CAVE	MICHAEL E. SADLER
COSMO EBOR:	A. D. LINDSAY
OXFORD	FRANCES PEMBER
BIRKENHEAD	HERBERT WARREN
CRAWFORD & BALCARRES	P. S. ALLEN
GREY OF FALLODON	H. J. WHITE
J. A. SIMON	FALCONER MADAN
J. W. MACKAIL	GILBERT MURRAY
C. H. ST. JOHN HORNBY	C. S. SHERRINGTON

OUR UNPROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—I was much interested in the admirable cartoon in your last number of the two unprofessional journalists, Dean Inge and Lord Birkenhead. The Prime Minister has very rightly put a stop to Lord Birkenhead's literary work; when is the Church going to follow suit and give the Dean a hint that the job for which he is paid is to look after the spiritual well-being of the flock under his care, and not to take the bread out of the mouths of professional journalists, who, in these hard times, have a struggle to live? Is it to be wondered at that many people consider that Christianity has failed when we see the leading lights of the Church behaving in this way? If I were one of Dean Inge's parishioners, and went to him for spiritual advice, would he, in the brief intervals between his strenuous literary labours, have time to listen to me? I wonder!

I am, etc.,
KATHARINE COX
Priory Road, Hampstead, N.W.

DAMAGE TO ROADS

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Remedies are forthcoming for this evil through applied incisive thought such as Mr. Wheel- don evinces in your issue of May 30, when pointing out the inherent defects of springs. By their vertical action springs do protract the time period of road shock impact, and thus palliate it with added comfort. Inasmuch, however, as they, like rubber, can only function by "action and re-action," which ever remain "equal and opposite," they do not overcome the aggregate effect of shock on roads and vehicles.

Criticism has been evoked because no specific details of any remedy were submitted in my letter which you kindly inserted in your issue of May 23. The really essential matter now is to co-ordinate all interests in legislative action for approved methods of road preservation, whatever they may be. Many have been proposed.

Since the imperative necessity for beneficial change is now recognized, a principle not generally apprehended may advantageously have consideration meanwhile. Technical skill is not required to understand that the application of it is as simple as it has been proved effective in use. In reasoning on it, the basic fact is accepted that "no body can resist motion." The general utilization of it to economic advantage is therefore the objective to be aimed at.

The attempt at balancing billiard balls on top of each other is a usual popular illustration of unstable equilibrium. If around the axle of a wheel steel balls are placed in this same unstable equilibrium with freedom of movement, then on the impact of shock in the forward moving half of the wheel, the shock is at once irresistibly conveyed to the opposite backward moving half of the rotating wheel, because this fluid steel ring of balls acts as "wheels within wheels," around its core. The ruinous reactionary shock of the rigid wheel is thus transmuted into the one and only useful form of momentum for wheel repulsion.

So long as man ignores the natural laws which govern the right use of force, he remains the slave of his tools. He becomes their master when he moves in harmony with truth.

It is sincerely to be hoped that by approved methods, the "Roads Improvement Act, 1925," will enable this to be done. Otherwise, progress creeps unprofitably. As your correspondent suggests, by this essential change "the first to benefit would be the motor owner himself."

I am, etc.,

Arundel Street, London, W.C.

JOHN MUIR

VERSE

THE PUZZLE

THE cuckoo with a near flute,
The orchard with a mild sigh,
Bird and blossom so salute
The rainbow sky.

The brown herd in the green shade,
The parson in his lawn chair,
Poor and gentry both evade
The furnace air.

The moon-inveigled mushroom,
The crocus with her mauve horn,
Elf and fairy fleck the gloom
Of late moist morn.

The rimed leaf on the highlands,
The old tramp on the mill drove
Each whirls on, nor understands
God's freezing love.

EDMUND BLUNDEN.

NEW BOOKS AT A GLANCE

MR. LYTTON STRACHEY may have been a symptom of the reaction against the intolerable conventional biography, or he may have originated that reaction; we are not concerned to settle the question. The point is that since he succeeded there has been a fairly general and extremely welcome improvement in biographies. How exceptional a few years ago would have been such a book as 'Parnell,' by Mr. St. John Ervine (Benn, 12s. 6d. net), and now it will disconcert few. It belongs to a very promising series, 'Curiosities of Politics,' of which Mr. Philip Guedalla is general Editor. We must not anticipate our own review of this book of Mr. St. John Ervine's, but must draw attention to his conclusion. The Irish, he says, are as incapable as ever of democracy, fitted only for dictation of the sternest kind. We must wait, he adds, till another Parnell comes and "beats the Irish into a unity that will endure."

The idea that an author has a self more real than that revealed in his books dies hard, and we are always being invited to see him in shirt-sleeves and in slippers for something more significant than we shall find in his writings. Here is 'Lafcadio Hearn's American Days' (Bodley Head, 18s. net), by Mr. E. L. Tinker. It seems, at first glance, a very American book, but the author's woodcuts in illustration of scenes in New Orleans and the facsimiles of Hearn's own drawings give it unusual attraction.

'The English Country Gentleman' (Hurst and Blackett, 18s. net), by Mr. Neville Lytton, is a curious example of incompatibility of temperament and subject. The Lyttons are too florid, expensive and self-conscious to deal quite naturally with such subjects. But this discursive, amateurish book is certainly not dull, and in a casual turning of its pages we have come upon some rather shrewd though not particularly relevant remarks.

He who would escape in the environment he makes for himself the two extremes of commonplace and Knebworthian display might do worse than take for guide Mr. John Gloag, author of 'Time, Taste and Furniture' (Grant Richards, 12s. 6d. net). We can never have too many sensible books on furniture, and we applaud this author's decision to put in the forefront of his work an example of good design by a living designer instead of flying to the antique.

Three topographical books of very different kinds next claim attention. One of these comes from a new publisher, Mr. Noel Douglas, who apparently understands how to secure comeliness in a book issued at a low price. 'Some German Spies,' by Mr. S. L. Bensusan (Douglas, 8s. net) is a reprint of articles in which the author dealt with his experiences, mostly agreeable, in various German "cures." He is appreciative of German willingness to let bygones be bygones so far as a paying guest is in question. 'Lundy' (Longmans, 12s. 6d.) is a general description of the island, but seems to be of special interest to the ornithologist, for whom it provides full lists of the birds visiting or permanently inhabiting the island. 'Brazil after a Century of Independence' (Macmillan, 17s.), by Mr. Herman James, takes account of the history, the products and the life of the country.

'The Principles of British Constitutional Law' (Methuen, 8s. 6d. net) has special reference to more or less recent changes in the working of the British Constitution. From the same publishers, and at the same price, we have a formidably entitled but in fact quite popular work on 'The Sensory Basis and Structure of Knowledge.' Its author, Mr. H. J. Watt, has written a good deal on portions of this subject in the *British Journal of Psychology*. He now gives us an introduction to the "systematic psychology of cognition," and it will be a pity if the general reader is scared away by such a description of the book. It deals with a subject of immediate interest to all of us.

NEW FICTION

BY GERALD BULLETT

Daimon. By E. L. Grant Watson. Cape. 7s. 6d. net.

The Polyglots. By William Gerhardt. Cobden-Sanderson. 7s. 6d. net.

A QUOTATION from Rudolph Steiner on the title-page prepares us for the worst: "Between me and the Spirit of the Universe something interposes which reaches beyond me, but is not yet the same as divinity. This something is my daimon." But Mr. Grant Watson cheats our fears by writing a novel—full of vivid description and acute characterization—that rises high above average well-made fiction by virtue of the urge and integrity of its emotion. It is the story of Martin O'Brian, who figured in a previous book ('The Desert Horizon'), and of his wife, Maggie. These two are well and intimately studied, especially Maggie, who is the better worth study; but in a sense it is the Australian Desert that is the most important character—a brooding immensity that fascinates and finally entralls those who dwell with it. Martin himself falls a willing victim to this strange enchantment; Maggie fears it and struggles to escape, knowing herself to be less dear to her husband than is, in some half-mystical fashion, the inhuman splendour of the desert. She bitterly resents this rival claim on his devotion; the social isolation is hateful to her; and she fears for his sanity and for her own. This fundamental discord, which underlies the superficial happiness of their marriage, is the main theme. Yet that is a misleading statement, for indeed their need of each other is only one degree less profound than Martin's passion for the bleak solitudes. When a crisis occurs, and Maggie, resolute in her despair, runs away, Martin, overtaking her, is forced to choose between his two loves. He chooses his wife, and returns with her to civilization. Fifteen years of comparative serenity follow; then the desert, symbol of an heroic solitary quest, calls him again:

Martin wished he was young again. If they were young, then in the natural warmth of youth would they be united, but if now, with a sullen dignity, she chose to hold aloof, there was no instinctive ardour to break the barriers. He felt, as he walked along the track-way between scarlet-leaved saplings of eucalyptus, that he was too old, after a life of labour, for that conflict. He wanted peace and the mild rapture, which in the smile of nature, the great mother, he knew how to discern and to make his own. And yet his heart desired the human love and for that love had paid the price of sacrifice and pain. . . . The desires and needs within himself he could surmise; on the one side was the personal happiness, the intimate tenderness that the heart clings to, the joy that it bathes and refreshes in its warm blood, and on the other the impersonal serenity which the soul embraces.

This conflict is described on an earlier page, which tells us how Martin perceived his life to be compounded of two separate elements: on the one side "a solace, vague and indefinite and unknown," and on the other, "the friction and the straining towards unity of divergent and ageing personalities." Stricken with this strange, spiritual hunger, the man leaves his wife. We watch her turning over in her mind the enigma of personal identity:

It was strange that past and present should seem so divided, yet remain indivisible. The girl whom she could so faintly remember, what had she in common with this sad woman with white hair? . . . There seemed little resemblance. Yet there was a link other than that of time; these two could never have existed apart; each was the parent and the child of the other; or were they rather both but imperfect phases of some greater unknown personality, that in life remained for ever veiled and withdrawn? Such were her thoughts, and he, too, was also like that. The past, present, and future were one in him, and his true personality was outside and greater than them all.

These quotations will demonstrate, more eloquently than any exposition, that Mr. Grant Watson is an unusually suggestive and thoughtful writer as well as a good storyteller.

In 'The Polyglots,' Mr. William Gerhardt has executed a kind of variant on the theme of his first novel, 'Futility.' Though impudently haphazard and discursive, it is a very brilliant performance. The narrator and chief character is Georges Hamlet Alexander Diabologh, a young officer in the British Army who, having created for himself a military sinecure at Harbin, near Vladivostock, lives in a polyglot household consisting of Aunt Teresa, widow of a Russian; Uncle Emmanuel, her second husband; Sylvia Ninon Thérèse Anastathia Vanderflint, their daughter; together with Uncle Lucy and Aunt Molly, their countless children, and various hangers-on. This situation provides Mr. Gerhardt with just the opportunity he wants; and he squeezes the last ounce of comedy out of it. The period is post-armistice, and mixed in with the account of this comic and crowded family of polyglots is a good deal of amusing satire and half-philosophical disquisition. The dancing wit and impish humour of the book make it irresistible. I find, on looking back, that I have marked no fewer than seventeen long passages for quotation. If I present only one of them here, it must be clearly understood by the reader that there are at least sixteen others equally salutary:

. . . a youthful British officer, one of those young and simple and good chaps who, in wars waged for freedom, civilization, the avengement of national honour, the suppression of tyranny, the restoration of law and order, and such-like blood-exacting causes, are freely sacrificed by the thousand, and their conception of the world is a vague sense that something is wrong somewhere and that somebody ought to be hanged. So they set off to their doom, cheerfully, on the off-chance that their foe is that evil whose blood they are after, and having set out on their righteous (and adventurous) cause they now care but little about the origin of the wrong. And so they set out to kill and maim, and to be killed and maimed in turn, cheerfully, in the "old bean" sort of fashion.

This, now that I come to look into it more closely, is far below the general level of excellence. I wish (but it is too late now) that I had quoted from some scene in which Uncle Emmanuel figures, or from the exquisitely comical chapters concerning Georges Hamlet Alexander's night of love with his pretty cousin Sylvia, or from the farcical tragedy of Uncle Lucy's death, or from some of the children's dialogue. One's mind teems with the memorable episodes, comic or pathetic and sometimes both at once, that this copious book contains. I am sorry, however, that Mr. Gerhardt allows his young man to discuss with Aunt Teresa the very book that he is writing about her, and to identify this book with 'The Polyglots' itself. This was a foolish mistake, for it calls our attention to the fact (which would otherwise pass unnoticed, being part of the convention of first-person narration) that in the real world we do not, however strong the provocation, hold up our relatives to public ridicule. The question immediately arises: What will poor Aunt Teresa say when she reads the book? And, more important still, what will Cousin Sylvia do when she finds herself thus exposed? We are given to understand that Aunt Teresa, who is now reduced to penury, will receive the greater part of the author's royalties on sales. But will this, I wonder, compensate her for learning of Uncle Emmanuel's comical but undeniably sordid infidelities? This obvious blunder on Mr. Gerhardt's part provides occasion, however, for a definition of humour that is worth having. "Humour is when I laugh at you," says the devoted nephew to his aunt, "and laugh at myself in the doing (for laughing at you), and laugh at myself for laughing at myself, and thus to the tenth degree. It's unbiased, free like a bird. . . . We laugh—we laugh because we cannot be destroyed, because we do not recognize our destiny in any one achievement, because we are immortal, because there is not this or other world, but endless worlds: eternally we pass from one into another. In this lies the hilarity, futility, the insurmountable greatness of all life." Amen and Amen.

REVIEWS

THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR

Sidelights on the Thirty Years' War. By Hubert G. R. Reade. Kegan Paul. 3 Vols. 45s. net.

IT is impossible to do anything but give the faintest outline of this most important work, in a newspaper article. To criticize it as it deserves would take at least ten thousand words. The subject is so vast, the erudition so extensive, and the research has been so thorough that it is patent the book has been the result of nearly a lifetime of hard work. The list of authorities consulted fills more than one hundred and fifty pages and the archives of England, Ireland, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Germany have been ransacked for letters, reports and details of the lives of the chief actors in the book.

One of the objects of the work is to show some of the reasons that contributed to the break up of the power of Spain. Motley has traced the rise of the Dutch Republic, and Mr. Reade carries on his history from the time when the Netherlands had become a sovereign State. Naturally the chief figure in the great romance is the Spanish general Ambrogio Spinola. This great commander is for the first time fairly presented to the English reading public. It is true that Velazquez has made his face and figure known to the whole world in his great picture of 'The Surrender of Breda' (The Prado).

Spinola is known by his chief exploit and by the Lanzas, but here, his curious rise to fame, almost unknown except to students, is set forth. As the author says, the Marquis Ambrogio Spinola came of no mean house. The Spinolas and Dorias for centuries had been rivals for the first place in Genoa. Ambrogio Spinola was a millionaire. "All his life up till thirty years of age had been passed in mercantile pursuits in Genoa. His brother Federigo was an officer in the Flemish service, having entered it as a gentleman volunteer, then styled an adventurer. Brought up by a pious mother, to whom both brothers were devotedly attached, they scarcely knew their father who had died when they were very young.

All at once, either as the author says from a wish to gain honours and renown, or to outshine his rival Prince Giovanni Andrea Doria, he joined with his brother Federigo in levying forces for the Flemish crown, against the Dutch. Federigo's career was cut short by a cannon ball off the coast of Walcheren as he stood on the deck of his own flagship, issuing his orders in the fight.

Ambrogio and his levies reached Flanders in July, 1602, having marched from Milan in the month of May. At once he showed the kind of man he was by issuing the severest orders against plundering, and by executing two Italian gentlemen, his personal friends, for not attending to his decree. Most captains in those days generally lost a third of their men upon a lengthy march. Spinola attended so well to their wants that his losses were infinitesimal, and on the road he drilled his raw recruits so thoroughly that they arrived in Flanders looking like veterans. He endeared himself to his followers by paying them for two months as they settled at Culoz in what was then Spanish Burgundy. The Spanish veteran officers, men of the stamp of Julian Romero, looked upon Spinola with contempt. "What can this Genoese Huckster know of war," they said. They were soon to know of their mistake.

Marching from Ostend, by way of Blankenberghe and Zeebrugge, Spinola reached the river Swyne with his advanced guard. He ordered his second-in-command to cross the river with his men. The officer, probably a hardened veteran, who held his unproved commander in contempt, flatly refused. "The king's soldiers," he said, "are not ducks and are too good to waste like this."

Little did he know his man. Spinola yelled, "Cur" then seized a pike, and plunged into the stream, calling upon his men to follow him. The water that only proved waist high was forded and with a rush the soldiers stormed the Fort of St. Catherine, took that of St. Philip in their stride, and were only beaten back by a strong force of Dutch and the incoming tide, from taking Sluys itself.

From that day Spinola's name was made as a bold captain. Time and experience made him one of the foremost leaders of his age. All knew he did not serve for pay, and that he held no allegiance to the King of Spain. It is the opinion of the author that the failure of the policy Spinola pursued was largely accountable for the breakdown of Spanish power and gave the opening to France and England to found their empires overseas.

There were other causes that contributed to the break up of the power of Spain, and causes nearer home, but, the defeat of the policy of Spinola that was directed to the isolation of the Netherlands, certainly had its share.

The great Napoleon, as the author points out, was an assiduous student of the history of the Thirty Years' War, and in his contest with Great Britain, followed the system Spinola had employed against the Dutch. Both failed from lack of adequate sea power. The speculation is an interesting theme to follow, and indeed throws a sidelight on the Thirty Years War never before perceived, or written of, as far as I know, by any English historian.

It is I think one of the many little blemishes in a national character that stands so high, to mistake dullness for seriousness. No two qualities can be more different, and your dull ass is often an unconscious buffoon. The author points out and proves by extracts from their letters that the Italians and the Spaniards of those days appreciated natural scenery and that the French and English failed to rise to it. Milton he quotes as holding the elm and willow bordered water meadows of Horton, far above the Alps. These he calls "icy mountains cold," on which bleached the bones of the Waldensian "saints."

The most instructive extract that he gives is from the account written in 1599 by the Infanta Isabella of her journey from Milan to Brussels. From Taverna she followed the Ticino "through some valleys which

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are the most beautiful things in the world and the greenest, for they are clothed with a thousand kinds of forest trees . . ."

She walked down the road from Andermatt to Goeschenen through the Gorge of the Reuss, "shivering with cold, but for all this, I would not have missed seeing this country, for I doubt if one could see anything more beautiful in the world."

In his fifteenth chapter the historian has an illuminating reference to the relations of King James I, the Evangelical Union and the Duke of Savoy. The English merchants he informs us owed their wealth to their trade with Spain and its possessions. Their most dangerous rivals were the Dutch Protestants and the merchants of the Hanseatic League. "Proud as the English were of this liberty, their governing classes as a rule confined their interests to English concerns and the ignorance which English statesmen displayed of the conditions of Europe was a byword among diplomatists. But then, as now, it was easy to arouse the enthusiasm of the average Englishman for a cause which excited his sentiment, though it might appeal but little to his reasoning faculties." The way of the historian is hard. Either he must write now and then in the style of the last quotation, or fail to give a true picture of how his country was regarded from without. If he sticks to the truth, he runs the risk of being dubbed an anti-patriot.

The observations upon the secret diplomacy of the Stuart kings shows that the writer has the root of the matter in him. The English had accepted the Treaty of 1604 between Spain and England quite willingly. They saw in it the renewal of the old friendship with the House of Burgundy. When James fell out with his Parliament, he turned to the German Protestants for help, not in the least from love of them, for if he had a leaning any way it was towards high Anglicanism. The Protestants as the natural enemies of the House of Hapsburg gave James the opportunity by supporting them of posing as the champion of their creed. At the same time he was in close negotiation with the Duke of Savoy, a most fervent Catholic. Such was the secret diplomacy of the times. Except a small percentage of his counsellors, none of his subjects had an inkling of the state of things. The system failed, as the author says, probably on account of its secrecy, for had it but been known that the chief object of their policy was the restitution of the Protestants, James I and Charles I might have succeeded "had they enjoyed the intelligent support of their subjects."

Throughout the book there are scattered passages of a like character, showing that the author not only has dived deeply into archives but has reflected much on life. Descriptions of the social life of the period abound. The state of the roads, posts, bridges, wages and the price of provisions all receive attention. The author points out the gradual improvement of conditions, and the increased respect for human life, illustrating his point by giving us a list of the medical stores that Spinola recruited for his hospitals, as supplies for the wounded, "for without them all will die."

All these details about actual life relieve history, making it a human document. The account of the miserable part played by King James in his relations with the Throne and the Court is traced most accurately, and also how he allowed himself to be hoodwinked by Gondomar.

The book brings us down to modern times, always with an eye cast back upon the Thirty Years War, that, as the author thinks, gave Great Britain her supreme chance for development. It concludes a little bit "en queue de poisson." Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Wilson, he of "il gran rifiuto," if it was ever made by any man, come rather in the guise of funeral baked meats after the feast of greater men who fill the pages of the work.

R. B. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM

SOME CONTEMPORARY VERSE.

The Sirens: an Ode. By Laurence Binyon. Macmillan. 5s. net.

Selected Poems. By Siegfried Sassoon. Heinemann. 3s. 6d. net.

Poems and Fables. By R. C. Trevelyan. The Hogarth Press. 3s. net.

Parallax. By Nancy Cunard. The Hogarth Press. 3s. 6d. net.

First Poems. By Edwin Muir. The Hogarth Press. 4s. 6d. net.

Lost Lane. By Dorothy Wellesley. Heinemann. 5s. net.

Columbus: a Historical Poem. By R. C. K. Ensor. Secker. 5s. net.

The Bamboo Grove, and Other Poems. By Charles Graves. Cape. 3s. 6d. net.

MR. BINYON and Mr. Sassoon are poets: it is a word which we should hesitate to apply to any of the other writers represented in this batch, interesting and promising as some of them are.

'The Sirens' is a magnificent failure. Magnificent, because it attempts nothing less than the presentation, on the grand scale, in the grand manner, according to the grand tradition, of the ultimate adventures and aspirations of the spirit of man. A failure, because no one could succeed in such a task without the equipment of supreme poetic genius—the sort of genius we recognize at sight in Wordsworth's great ode, in the rarest flights of Crashaw or of Shelley. Mr. Binyon has all of a poet's equipment except that recognizable but inexpressible splendour, which comes not by taking thought. He has sincerity, dignity, nobility: at his occasional best, he has even magic:

Whither is she gone, wing'd by the evening airs,
Yon sail that draws the last of light afar,
On the sea-verge alone, despising other cares
Than her own errand and her guiding star?
She leaves the safe land, leaves the roofs, and the long roads
Travelling the hills to end for each at his own hearth.
She leaves the silence under slowly-darkening elms,
The friendly human voices, smell of dew and dust,
And generations of men asleep in the old earth.
Between two solitudes she glides and fades,
And round us falls the darkness she invades.

We venture to call this poetry; and that is very high praise. But compare it with the very greatest poetry, and the difference is immediately apparent.

Mr. Sassoon has nobility but not dignity. He despises dignity. He records the sharp, urgent moment; and, being a man of genius, with abnormally sensitive apprehensions and a profound capacity for appreciation and indignation, he gives that moment a thrilling and unforgettable quality. Nothing that he writes is negligible; but his war-poems remain his best. There is plenty of anger, plenty of sympathy, plenty of satire, in English poetry; but we have to go back a long way for anything that stabs and sears with such horrible simplicity as this:

Does it matter?—losing your sight? . . .
There's such splendid work for the blind;
And people will always be kind,
As you sit on the terrace remembering
And turning your face to the light.

Do they matter?—those dreams from the pit? . . .
You can drink and forget and be glad,
And people won't say that you're mad;
For they'll know that you've fought for your country,
And no one will worry a bit.

Mr. Trevelyan's 'Poems and Fables' are thoughtful and ingenious, and rendered notable here and there by touches of fancy and wit; but, if there is in them any strong evidence of inspiration, we have failed to detect it. In Miss Cunard, on the other hand, we do seem to detect, but doubtfully and dimly, some impulse stronger than mere acuteness and sensibility of mind; we rather fancy she may have the stuff of poetry in her; but, as the greater part of this particular poem

is to us entirely and literally unintelligible, we cannot be sure. Between the bizarre and the commonplace, poetry has admittedly a difficult course to thread. Mr. Muir prefers the latter. His thoughts are well-ordered and well-dressed, and he gives the effect of having solicited the forms of poetry conscientiously:

Those lumbering horses in the steady plough,
On the bare field—I wonder why, just now,
They seemed so terrible, so wild and strange,
Like magic power on the stony grange.

One sees exactly what he means: and the expression of it resembles poetry as chalk resembles cheese.

We confess to being intrigued by Mrs. Wellesley. Poet or not, she has an extraordinarily rich mind, an extraordinary command of fact and language. She writes verse rather as Ben Jonson wrote it in his more elaborate plays, accumulating rhetoric in the hope that the sheer weight and force of the accumulation will suddenly kindle flame. In Jonson, the kindling point is obvious: in Mrs. Wellesley, it is dubious: but amateurs of contemporary poetry should certainly keep their eyes on her. Consider this:

Small Pea-crab lodging in the Mussel shells,
Called Mussels' friend, for he, as Pliny tells,
Lovingly rids himself of spine and angle,
Fearing to wound his friend; the snails that rud
Their shells in spring; Round Mouth surprised and silly;
Hungarian cap; Sunset; and Shillyfilly;
The Sordid Necklaces frequenting mud;
And Western Top, pale gold with lustre whorls;
And Winkles carrying sacks of purple dyes. . . .

Or this:

Wise snakes know roots that bring
The dead to life, and carry in their mouths
A ruby, cure for the love-pain of youths?
And at a festival of tropic spring,
A serpent ringed with fire,
Whose shuffled skin will figure forth a spell,
Who guards a black king's treasure in a well,
Is thrown a maiden in a bride's attire.

No doubt Browning touched the imagination more nearly, with shells and purple dyes, in his 'Popularity'; and Keats with a snake in his 'Lamia.' But Mrs. Wellesley is not writing like Browning or like Keats; she writes throughout, and with a peculiar richness and elaboration, like herself.

Mr. Ensor and Mr. Graves have at least shown courage in attempting to rehabilitate the narrative poem in heroic couplets. 'Columbus' is an extremely interesting experiment, the work of a scholar who has a thorough knowledge of his subject and a clear conception of how to handle it: the many pedestrian passages strike one, not as mistakes, but as part of a deliberate plan; and there are fine moments. Mr. Graves, in the long tale which gives its name to his volume, is dull, but some of his lyrics show sensitiveness and accomplishment.

DR. NANSEN'S FIRST VOYAGE

Hunting and Adventure in the Arctic. By Fridtjof Nansen. Dent. 15s. net.

THIS description of Dr. Nansen's first voyage is at once a cheerful contribution to autobiography and a valuable description of wild life in the Arctic as seen through the eyes of a novice. In 1882, when Dr. Nansen was a young fellow of twenty or so, and thinking of devoting his life to the study of zoology, he decided to go and have a look at "the animal life and

physical features of the Arctic Ocean." So he persuaded the skipper of a new Norwegian sealing vessel about to make its first voyage to give him a passage, and embarked unconsciously on what was to prove the field of his fame and the occupation of his maturer years. The voyage lasted about four months, and provided material for nearly five hundred pages of narrative and description in Dr. Nansen's well-known breezy and exuberant style.

The account of the first sight of the eternal ice among which so much of the narrator's life was destined to be spent strikes the key-note of the whole book. "Even the weirdest shapes with towering spires of ice, as portrayed in the most exaggerated narratives of voyagers, could hardly vie with the impression produced by this uncanny light in the north, and the ghostly grinding noise, and the single ice-floes drifting on the surface of the inky water." Dr. Nansen here interjects a chapter on the drift ice which his own later explorations have done so much to reveal. He goes on to describe the engaging habits of the unfortunate saddleback, or Greenland seal, which formed the immediate quarry of his companions. Killing the helpless white-coated pups as they lie in crowds on the ice is not much of a sport, but it was fairly remunerative even in the 'eighties, when the skins fetched an average price of six or seven shillings. After giving a full account of the breeding-grounds of the seals, the author goes on to describe the bottlenose whale, the Polar bear, the bladdernose seal and other Arctic creatures. The illustrations from his own pencil have no pretensions to artistic merit, but help us to appreciate the things he saw.

GIOTTO AND THE NATIONAL GALLERY

Giotto. By Carlo Carrà. Translated from the Italian. A. Zwemmer, 78, Charing Cross Road. 25s. net.

THIS description of Dr. Nansen's first voyage is at world, suffers from certain important gaps. Some, such as the absence of a representative treatment of the nude by Signorelli, or of the melodrama of Christ's passion by Van der Weyden, are the fault of previous administrations (we had the opportunity of acquiring the magnificent Signorelli now in Berlin); others, such as effective Giotto's or Massaccio's, cannot and never could be had, because their true work is in fresco. These men are of first-class importance, not only for themselves, but for their profound influence on all subsequent art. Giotto is the most important, and he is entirely missing. Signor Carrà's book is therefore of the utmost value. It contains a hundred and ninety-two excellent reproductions from which as true a conception of Giotto's range and power can be gained as is possible outside Padua and Florence. Signor Carrà's text is learned and illuminating. He has avoided dogmatism because he has realized that Giotto scholarship and criticism is still incapable of absolute conclusions on many important points. He has been scrupulous to refer to the opinions of those who differ from him, and he makes no unsupported statements. Our best praise is, perhaps, that Signor Carrà's love for his subject has saved his careful criticism from dullness.



Trouble in China!

"FROM MELBOURNE TO MOSCOW"

By G. C. DIXON.

Illustrated. Demy 8vo. 16s. net.

The Author describes his sensational interviews with Sun Yat-sen, Welling'on Koo, Chang Tso Lin (the Chinese Generalissimo, and incidentally a tiny dwarf), and many other interesting personalities.

GEOFFREY BLES, 22, Suffolk Street, Pall Mall, S.W.1

SHORTER NOTICES

Dreams: and How to Interpret Them. By A Physician. Palmer. 3s. 6d. net.

IN this brief handbook "A Physician" is nothing if not dogmatic. Thus when on page 7 he blandly informs us that "Psychology may be said to do in the case of the mind what Physiology does in the case of the body," we can only reply that, while this may possibly become true in, say, a century or two, psychology is at present in much the same position as anatomy and physics in the middle ages. It has no even remotely established "normal," with which divergencies can be accurately compared, and scarcely one basic unit on which any two psychologists or psycho-theraputists are agreed. And in our opinion the readers of this book should have been told so. Instead, they are told positively, on page 13, that the "whole of our life actually happens in the brain," and confidently referred, on page 14, to the "grey matter that is YOU." Again, on page 17, the author informs them that the whole of the frontal area of the brain is uncharted, and yet is able to assure them in the following paragraph that "it is the Seat of the Intellect; the Abode of the Emotions; the Home of the Soul and the Mind." If he had added at least some indication as to how he knows this, we might perhaps have accepted his interpretations of the selected dreams which follow with slightly greater confidence.

The Little Brown Baby. By Peter Blundell. The Bodley Head. 7s. 6d. net.

MR. BLUNDELL has written a pleasant farcical comedy set in the island of Jallagar, which, he tells us, "lies in a part of the China Sea where the monsoon blusters for six months of the year and where for the other six months the skies are mostly kind,

the sea like glass, the heat bearable although at noon-day rather stifling." This place is provided with a Resident Governor, an Assistant Governor, and the Assistant Governor's pretty typist, not to mention a genial old toper of a doctor who marries a Chinese woman. But the great Gladstone Mortimer, a pompous and wealthy merchant, is Mr. Blundell's chief figure of fun; and the colour of Mrs. Mortimer's baby is the pivot on which the plot turns.

The Golf Courses of Great Britain. By Bernard Darwin. Cape. 12s. 6d. net.

MR. DARWIN'S book was first published in 1910 and has for some time been out of print. In this new edition, as he points out in his Preface, he has made extensive alterations, which bring it up to date, and, since he has not for many years played golf in Ireland and is in consequence ignorant of developments there, he has not included his original account of Irish courses. To golf enthusiasts the book will be a delight. Mr. Darwin has humour and is a past-master as a writer on the royal and ancient game. The book is divided into sixteen chapters, each dealing with a group of courses, and illustrated with water-colour sketches by Mr. Harry Rountree.

Some Other Bees. By Herbert Mace. Hutchinson. 4s. 6d. net.

IN spite of its title, which is as misleading as it is uncouth, Mr. Mace's book is full of interesting things concerning such creatures as butterflies, hawk-moths, and bees, the last, though they monopolize the title, occupying well under a quarter of the text. He has much to say of the migrations of butterflies, but we find his facts both more interesting and more sound than his general speculations on migration, which is by no means so simple as he is inclined to think. But when he keeps to his province Mr. Mace is good, and the illustrations are adequate.

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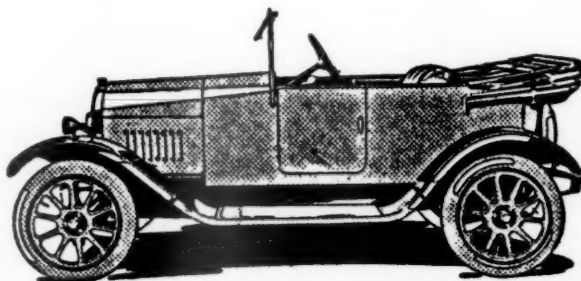
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[Copy]

April 16th, 1925

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MOTORING

SAFETY DEVICES

By H. THORNTON RUTTER

IT seems almost incredible that while motorists take special care of the engine of their cars they are often careless in giving due attention to the brakes. It is not many weeks ago that a car had an accident descending Countisbury Hill: it got out of control owing to defective brake linings, and the driver's wife was killed. At the inquest the driver stated that he always put the car in low gear descending the hill, and relied on the brakes to keep it under control at the steeper lower end. The brakes were adjusted before he left home that day, but he was amazed to find that the brake linings when examined were not ferodo, although he had originally had this material fitted. The car had been at a garage for overhaul, and evidently some other material had been substituted. Motorists should always see for themselves that brakes when repaired or relined are provided with a safety-device material such as ferodo and not a substitute. The Royal Automobile Club recently issued a warning in regard to accidents happening through cars fitted with good brakes pulling up suddenly without the driver duly warning following vehicles. Yet if all cars were fitted with spring bumpers, or guards in front and behind, little damage would ensue. This is a safety-device that is commonly used in America; yet it appears to be but slowly coming into fashion in this country, although its cost is small. Owing to the trend of bitumenized or tarred roads to become billowed, or develop a wavy surface, when heavy traffic is constantly running over them, the wheels of motor carriages are apt to leave the face of the road and thus add to the dangers of motoring, to say nothing of the extra cost in tyre wear. To mitigate the chances of the wheels leaving the highway, wise motorists fit shock absorbers on both front and rear springs in order to prevent the wheels jumping from wave to wave and also to add to the comfort of the passengers in making the vehicle travel more smoothly. But for one wise owner of a car there appear to be a hundred who are ignorant of the advantages of this safety device, judging by the number of cars devoid of shock absorbers.

* * *

During the French Grand Prix motor races many safety devices will be tested in the Grand Prix de tourisme race, which is run on July 19. One car has discarded back wheel brakes and is relying on front wheel brake drums of much larger area than usual, together with a brake on the transmission. Road races of this description, in which cars are equipped as for ordinary touring use, with closed bodies as well as open ones, are helpful in improving design and general equipment. A case in point is the present-day Swift models, which made such a favourable impression on the motoring public in the light car trials organized by the Royal Automobile Club in 1914 and afterwards in 1924. The lessons learnt in these competitions were applied so faithfully that to-day these cars stand out for staunchness and trustworthiness, which are great inducements to the public to use them. The practical result is that one seldom if ever sees one of these cars stranded on the road, while their power is such that no hill, however freakish in its steepness, is too stiff for them to climb. Another feature also produced from these events is the excellent turning lock; and so when hills are met with such as the Bluehills Mine Hill in the West of England, which has awkward hairpin bends to negotiate, Swift cars have always successfully climbed the ascent without any trouble or any need for reversing to negotiate the bad turns.

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CITY NOTES

Lombard Street, Thursday

DESPITE the fact that the recent failure of new issues in the Gilt-Edged market pointed to the necessity of borrowers offering more generous terms, the offer of £2,000,000 5% Debenture of Synthetic Ammonia & Nitrates, guaranteed by the Government under the Trade Facilities Acts at 98, served as an additional reason to depress the Gilt-Edged market, with the result that prices were all pruned down. In addition, the news from China foreshadowed grave possibilities, the further break in the French franc caused uneasiness, while nearer home not only was the labour outlook deemed more threatening, but the reports of Shipbuilding, Iron, Coal and Steel companies drew attention to the unsatisfactory state of our staple industries.

MINES

Some weeks ago the Kaffir share market underwent a spasm of weakness on a sudden realization that the dividends for the first half of the year would in general compare unfavourably with those of the preceding period, owing to the disappearance of the gold premium. How far these realizations have been justified may be judged from the results now published from the Rand. In the Rand Mines group the principal alterations are the cut from 25% to 15% in the City Deep rate, from 40% to 30% in the Crown Mines, and from 60% to 49% in the Modder "B." The Durban Deep, Geldenhuis and the Nourse drop out of the list altogether: as low grade propositions they suffer in a special degree from the changed conditions. The Modderfontein, however, stands out with an increase in the rate from 50% to 60%. Reflecting shrinkages on balance, the Rand Mines dividend is 50% in place of 60%. The most interesting feature of the announcement made by the Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Company is the arrival at the dividend paying stage of the New State Areas. This Company announces a first dividend of 7½%. The Government Areas has maintained its position with a dividend of 32½%, but the distributions of the other members of the "Johnnies" group are smaller than a year ago. The holding Company itself is again paying 15% free of Income Tax for the year, and repeating its previous allocation of £150,000 to reserve. As to the Union Corporation group, the Geduld's 16½% is the same as a year ago, but goes against 17½% in December. The rate of the Modder Deep is 65%, as compared with 75% in December, and 70% in June last year. The statement of the Chairman at the recent meeting of the Union Corporation, with reference to the San Francisco Mines of Mexico, is of more than passing interest. He stated that during the first half of the current financial year—that is during the six months to March 31 last—the San Francisco Mines of Mexico milled 71,170 tons for an operating profit of £180,000, compared with £306,321 for the whole of the previous financial year, a rate which showed an advance of 18%. As the dividend for the past year was 3s. 6d. per share, an improvement for the present year can reasonably be expected. Quite a large amount of work is going on which should have the effect of increasing the life of the property and ensuring a continuance of good profits. The Company has recently been active in acquiring additional mining

ground, on the extension of the San Francisco vein and containing other reefs, and the Chairman hoped that the time would come when these other reefs would supplement the present supplies for the reduction plant.

DISTILLERS

On May 30 I suggested Distillers as a thoroughly sound lock-up for twelve months. The figures just issued increase my optimism. Dividends of 20% have been paid for the year, after placing £200,000 to reserve, £75,000 to superannuation, and £100,000 to writing off a third of the capital expenditure through share transactions with Buchanan-Dewar and John Walker & Sons. Buchanan-Dewar, whose entire ordinary capital has recently been acquired by Distillers, show in their report to March 31, 1925, a profit of £1,024,371, while John Walker & Sons, the third firm in the new combine, show a gross profit of £718,468 for the ten months ending March 31, 1925. I think Distillers, the new combine represented by these three companies, will have a very prosperous future, and I repeat my recommendation.

FRANCOIS CEMENTATION

On April 25 I recommended a purchase of Francois Cementation Ordinary at 6s. 7½d.; they have recently touched 9s. 9d. The report for the year ended March 31, shows a trading profit of £61,707 and a net profit after ample allowances for depreciation, etc., of £44,474. These ordinary shares receive a dividend of 6d. free of tax, a satisfactory result in view of the recent drastic reorganization. I am told that these shares will go better. By the way, on May 23 I advised those who like a speculation to apply for the 5s. ordinary shares of the Gold Coast & General Syndicate. As they have already touched 8s. the recommendation was justified. I understand their first subsidiary, the Atta Gold Company, is shortly to appear.

THE WEEK'S REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Barclay Perkins report for the year ending March 31 shows net profits increased to £198,194.

The following Tea Company dividends have been declared:

Needem Company 40% against 35% last year.

The Dooars Company a final dividend of 30%.

Empire of India & Ceylon Company a final dividend of 25%.

The Makum (Assam) Company 30%.

Home & Colonial have declared an interim dividend of 1s. 6d. against 1s. 3d. last year.

General Electric show a profit of £1,029,983 for year ended March 31, 1925, against £835,561 for previous year.

British Oil & Cake Mills shareholders have ratified the agreement with Levers.

The trading results of William Beardmore for 1924 show a net loss of £503,094; this compares with a loss of £68,071 for 1923 and a profit of £96,167 for 1922.

The Caroni Sugar Estates show a profit of £72,665 for year ending December 31, 1924, against £62,675 for 1923.

Ebbw Vale Steel Iron & Coal Co. for the year ending March 31, 1925, show a net loss of £96,054. After meeting debenture and note charges, this compares with a net profit of £305,421 for the previous year.

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ACROSTICS

To allow increased space for Answers to Correspondents, the Rules for the Acrostic Competition are on occasion omitted. They will, however, always appear at least twice a month.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 173.

A CHILIAN TOWN,—A PROVINCE OF BRAZIL :
ON THESE YOU NOW MUST EXERCISE YOUR SKILL.

1. Loathsome as hell,—but anger nought avails!
2. Brings swift destruction upon Alpine dales.
3. Useless, and so to garrets relegated.
4. Will sleep a month when once his hunger's sated.
5. The gladiator there was wont to bleed.
6. A feature of these very lines you read.
7. The dwelling suits, but pray suppress the song.
8. Take what you need: to keep me would be wrong.
9. Denotes that thus, in point of fact, it stood.
10. Treat so your meat, 'tis spoilt, however good.

Solution to Acrostic No. 171.

Pibroc H¹ 1 How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,
Esa U Savage and shrill!
Tilt-yar D 'Childe Harold,' III. xxvi.
Experienced 2 The Lizard Orchis is *O. hircina*, the Spider
Renegad E Orchis *Ophrys aranifera*, the Bee Orchis *O.*
Burgla R *apifera*, and the Butterfly Orchis *Habenaria*
Orchi S² *bifolia*.
Ri F Note.—Gildenburgh, "the golden city,"
Obl Ivion was the name bestowed upon the North-
Unteachable amptonshire town by King Edgar when he
Groundse L rebuilt the cathedral in 966. It is now called
Heral D after the saint to whom its great church is
dedicated.

ACROSTIC No. 170.—The winner is Miss L. M. Maxwell, 156 Burnt Ash Hill, S.E. 12, who has chosen as her prize 'Plants and Man,' by F. C. Bower, published by Macmillan and reviewed in our columns on June 6. Sixteen other competitors chose this book, 24 named 'Menace from the Moon,' 9 'India as I Knew It,' etc., etc.

ALSO CORRECT: Jeff, Rho Kappa, Martha, Mrs. J. Butler, Barberry, Iago, Carrie, Baitho, Sisyphus, Owl, J. R. Cripps, Baldersby, A. M. W. Maxwell, Zyk, Madge, Margaret, M. B., C. J. Warden, M. A. S. McFarlane, A. de V. Blathwayt, Kirkton, John Lennie, Ceyx, Gay, F. Sheridan Lea, Zoozoo, C. A. Newman, G. M. Fowler, Doric, Vixen, T. E. Thomas, Maud Crowther, Oakapple, Gunton, Bolo, G. W. Miller, Glamis, R. J. M. W., Lillian, Twyford, Hanworth, Lady Duff, Quis, E. K. P., Tyro, Capt. Wolseley, Carlton, Miss Carter, and C. A. S.

ONE LIGHT WRONG: Farsdon, Pussy, Jay, Rev. E. P. Gatty, A. R. N. Cowper-Coles, J. D. Turner, Borydyke, M. Darby, Lorraye, Stucco, C. H. Burton, E. Roxburgh, Ruth Bevan, Mrs. A. Lole, Mrs. Hulls, Miss Ruby Macpherson, J. Sutton, H. de R. Morgan, Bullfinch, J. Chambers, East Sheen, Lady Mottram, M. Story, R. Ransom, N. O. Seljam, St. Ives, F. M. Petty, S. M. Groves, C. E. Ford, Boskerris, and D. L.

TWO LIGHTS WRONG: Chip, Polamar, Gladys P. Lamont, Roan, F. D. Leeper, and Sir Reginald A. Egerton. All others more.

For Light 1, Verse-maker and Verser are accepted; for Light 6, Quina, Quinia, and Quinina.

ACROSTIC No. 169.—One Light wrong: Lady Duke.

S. M. GROVES.—Light 11 was also wrong: *None* instead of *Nowhere*.

SISYPHUS AND BAITHO.—After full consideration I still prefer Pentateuch to Patriarch and Pasch. "Pasch is the Christian Easter." Yes, but the Jews do not hold that in reverence! On the other hand, many millions of Christians reverence the Patriarchs of Constantinople and Alexandria.

ACROSTIC No. 171.—The winner is Miss Sylvia M. Groves, 21 Vicarage Road, Edgbaston, who has selected as her prize 'Varia,' by E. M. Brougham, published by Heinemann and reviewed in our columns on June 13. Twenty-six other competitors named this book, fourteen chose 'The Land and its People,' etc., etc.

ALSO CORRECT: A. de V. Blathwayt, F. M. Petty, Dolmar, H. de R. Morgan, Lionel Cresswell, Mrs. J. Butler, Peter, Lady Duff, Oakapple, F. D. Leeper, Quis, M. I. R., J. Lennie.

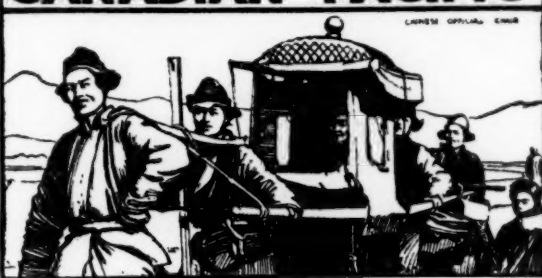
ONE LIGHT WRONG: Gay, Lillian, Ruth Bevan, A. M. W. Maxwell, Jay, Iago, M. A. S. McFarlane, N. O. Sellam, Madge, Bolo, Sisyphus, Ceyx, C. J. Warden, Vera Hope, Stucco, Barberry, D. L., St. Ives, Capt. Wolseley, Lady Mottram, Margaret, Baldersby, R. H. Boothroyd, East Sheen, Miss Carter, G. W. Miller, Beechworth, J. Sutton, Rho Kappa, C. A. S., G. M. Fowler, Martha, Hanworth, A. R. N. Cowper-Coles, Zoozoo, Hely Owen.

TWO LIGHTS WRONG: Kirkton, Reginald Eccles, F. Sheridan Lea, Boskerris, L. M. Maxwell, Carlton, Baitho, Borydyke, Twyford, Farsdon, C. E. C., Chip, Carrie, Maud Crowther, Glamis, Rev. E. P. Gatty, Sir Reginald Egerton, J. Chambers, Jeff, Vixen, C. H. Burton, and M. Story. All others more.

For Light 10 Untractable is accepted.

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Mr. Charles Sheath, J.P., seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

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